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THE MAIDEN'S DEATH.

BY ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

Is she dying? ye who grieve
Do answer 'Yea.' And will she leave
Our world so soon, and separate be
From this life's unresting sea, . . .
Where the harpies' ghastly motion
Hovers; and the wind's hoarse passion
Raves; and there's no room nor rest
For the halcyon's fabled nest?—
From these depths the heavens draw
Her drops of life by nature's law,
To form cloud in angels' sight,
Illumined by the great god light.

She is dying, ye who know
Beauty's fairness in a show—
Youth's high dreams where angels enter,
Dreamt on some low peradventure—
Wealth's soft strewing of the ways,
Love's deep vowing in self praise—
Weep for her who doth remove
From beauty, youth, wealth—ay! and love!
But . . . but *ye*—for I am turning
Unto some of wider learning—
Ye who know how tears find place
'Twixt the show-mask and the face—
How dream-pillows slide away
Leaving foreheads on the clay—

[This poem is one of a number of early poems by Elizabeth Barrett Barrett, as she then was, which are contained in a quarto MS. volume disposed of at the recent sale of Browning MSS. 'The Maiden's Death' is undated, but stands among others, one of which bears the date 1839.—EDITOR.]

THE MAIDEN'S DEATH.

How the foot may smoothly tread,
While the thornwreath pricks the head—
How the mouth, with love-vows laden,
Soon. . . oh, weep not for that maiden!

Dust to dust! She lies beneath
The stone which speaks to life of death!
Young, beauteous, wealthy 'neath the sun,
And loved! yet who weep for her? *None.*

*THE LOST TRIBES.*¹

BY GEORGE A. BIRMINGHAM.

CHAPTER XIII.

LONG ago, thirty or forty years ago, the English people used to be much troubled by stories of famines in Ireland. Being themselves well fed and having very tender hearts, the English hate to hear of anybody else being hungry. Whenever they were told that the Irish wanted food they gave orders that food should be provided. The Prime Minister of the day—minister means servant—did what he was told. He took from the public purse ample funds for the feeding of the Irish.

But the English, besides being tender-hearted, are business men, and, in the days when famines were common in Ireland, they believed in a science called political economy. It is the science which explains and justifies the existence of business men, and therefore it attracted the English as soon as it was invented. Now, according to the science of political economy it is wrong to feed hungry people without first making them work for the food. The English therefore decided that the Irish must do something which might fairly be regarded as work, for which wages, in the form of food, might be paid. 'Let us,' they said, 'set these Irish to work in the first place. They are, and always have been, lazy beasts. The work will do them as much good as the food.' But the professors of political economy, the chosen seers of the English people, had another message from heaven to deliver. It is not, so it appears, right that men should be paid from the public purse for doing anything useful. This is a profound truth, and the English, though they have lost much other faith, still believe it. They still act upon it, though less crudely than forty years ago. Nowadays when they see an Irishman who has nothing to eat and does not seem to be able to get anything, they make him a Government official. They pay him a salary and feel perfectly certain that they are not outraging the principles of political economy. He will work; but the most careful critic will not be able to discover the use of what he does. By this policy a stop has been put to the

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recurrence of Irish famines. No one in Ireland has now any excuse for starving.

But forty years ago the official class had not yet been invented. The English, tender-hearted philosophers, had not hit upon this cure for our chronic poverty. The splendid idea of setting hungry men to prey upon their neighbours by writing letters, collecting statistics and generally worrying, did not occur to anyone at first. Indeed, even if it had been thought of, it would not have been practicable. In those days comparatively few of us could read or write. Some other work as useless as the issuing of official papers had to be found for us. The Government hit upon the idea of making roads which led to nowhere. The starving people were set to work on them, and, in order that as much labour as possible might be used with the smallest possible benefit to the community, the Government insisted on its roads being very well laid down. One of them was made in Druminawona.

It started at right-angles to the demesne wall of Druminawona House. A wayfarer who wanted to reach it from that end had first to get into the demesne and then climb the wall, which was nearly twelve feet high. It led to a spot about a hundred yards from the main road. In order to reach that end of it you leave the highway and cross a small bog. Between these two points the Government road ran among hills and over streams for nearly two miles. It was inconceivable to the engineers who planned it that this road could ever be of use to anyone. They went home, after seeing it made, with the comfortable conviction that they had saved a number of Irishmen from starving without being false to the principles of political economy.

But there is a tricky spirit—an Irish water fairy perhaps—which takes a fiendish delight in upsetting the plans which Englishmen make for the good of Ireland. Policies and laws which look quite perfect in Westminster develop curious twists when they cross St. George's Channel. They do not work out in the least as reasonable men suppose they must. The fate of the famine relief road in Druminawona illustrates the malign ingenuity of the fairy. No one supposed that it could be of any use; but it turned out that it was. It became a favourite promenade for members of the Royal Irish Constabulary when engaged in what is called patrol duty. It is a nice dry road and there is never the smallest risk of meeting anyone on it who ought to be arrested. It was also, of all roads round Druminawona, the one which Mr. Mervyn liked best.

He was fond of walking for its own sake. He liked solitude. And there was a series of beautiful views to be seen and several rapid streams to be crossed by picturesque bridges. Thus within forty years of its making the road turned out to be a real benefit to the police, an important section of society, and to be a source of innocent pleasure to an elderly clergyman of whom assuredly no Government had ever heard.

Mr. Mervyn, having made up his mind that he need not call on Mrs. Dann, walked at an easy pace. He crossed the patches of bog, reached the road he loved and meandered along it looking forward to reaching in due time a very favourite resting-place. He went with head up, gazing at the hills on either side of him. His lips began to move, forming words. Soon he spoke aloud, finding strong satisfaction in the words of the poet he loved :

‘ Lights and shades
Which marched and countermarched about the hills
In glorious apparition.’

Then he stopped, for the next few lines of the poem find Wordsworth in his mood of pompous prose. They were not dear to Mr. Mervyn, who was no indiscriminate admirer of good and bad alike. He began to recite another passage, a more famous one, and stopped again when he came to the line about ‘the dreary intercourse of daily life.’ He was not thinking particularly of Mrs. Dann, but he wished sincerely that the people whom he met in daily life were not so entirely out of tune with the ‘haunting passion’ of the ‘sounding cataract.’

The road, skirting a hillside, turned sharply round a large grey rock. Beyond the rock a narrow bridge, supported on a single arch, spanned a rushing brown torrent. It was very pleasant to sit on the wall of the bridge and watch the water flowing underneath. The men of the Royal Irish Constabulary knew the spot and often spent happy hours in gazing at the water. All men who lead a contemplative life—and the Irish police in country places cannot be active—are fond of running water. It reminds them of the passage of time, assures them that the minutes, days, and years are really hastening on, a truth which it is very difficult to realise if you have nothing to do. For the busy man, with engagements to keep, the passage of time is a nuisance. He wants it to stand still. To the meditative quietist time moves too slowly. He finds a pleasure in being reminded, by a brook or otherwise, that it really

is going on, that his dinner or his bed is actually nearer than it was because a bubble which he saw far up the stream has passed out of sight.

But the men of the Royal Irish Constabulary were not selfish. They realised that Mr. Mervyn's need of the brook's teaching was greater than theirs. They liked leaning over the wall of the bridge, but when they saw Mr. Mervyn coming they always stood upright, saluted him, and marched on.

This afternoon, after rounding the rock, Mr. Mervyn saw that Sergeant Ginty, attended by a well-proportioned constable, was standing on the bridge. With them was a stranger, a young man dressed in a way which gave Mr. Mervyn a feeling of acute discomfort, almost of actual fear. He wore a suit of clothes of an iron-grey colour, cut in such a way that their very appearance suggested mental energy and efficiency. His face was thin, clean-shaved, and eager. His head was slightly tilted to one side and he was looking at Sergeant Ginty over his shoulder and out of the corners of his eyes.

Mr. Mervyn wished to turn round and slink back out of sight round the corner of the grey rock. He was unable to do this because the strange young man caught sight of him and held him fascinated. Sergeant Ginty and his muscular constable, whose faces were shining with perspiration, turned round, as soon as the stranger's eyes were off them, and walked with undignified haste back towards Druminawona. The young man approached Mr. Mervyn with outstretched hand.

'You're the Reverend Theophilus,' he said. 'I'd have known you anywhere. Old Sally May Dann has told me quite a bit about you. I recognise you as being in complete harmony with a scene which the poet Wordsworth would have admired. Sally May told me of your devotion to that bard. It was amid surroundings like this that he wrote his immortal lines on "Imagination and Taste, How Impaired and Restored." I honour you, sir, for your devotion to William Wordsworth. My name is Bobby Sebright.'

He shook Mr. Mervyn's hand heartily.

'I'm doddering round these islands,' he said, "'Stepping Westward," if you'll allow me to speak from the point of view of a man who has been having a look round London in the hope of getting material for the instruction of the great American public on the subject of Home Rule. Sally May is of opinion that I don't require to circulate much beyond this locality to get what I want. That

simplifies my job some if she's right. So far I haven't struck it rich in the way of copy ; but things may brighten up when I meet your prominent citizens.'

'You've not been here very long, have you ?' said Mr. Mervyn.

'Stepped through Sally May's front door at 2.47 P.M.,' said Bobby Sebright. 'According to my watch, a five-dollar timepiece, guaranteed for twelve months, it is now 4.13 P.M., say one hour twenty-six minutes, of which one hour went in lunch and mixed conversation with Sally May and a charming young lady—your daughter, I believe, Mr. Mervyn. Net balance for study of Irish problem twenty-six minutes.'

He paused. Mr. Mervyn felt bound to make a remark of some kind. He chose a very obvious one.

'I'm afraid that in so short a time you can hardly have gathered any very valuable impressions.'

'Don't you waste any time in politeness, Mr. Mervyn, when talking to me. I shan't buck any against a plain statement of your opinion. "Result nil." That's what you mean to imply. Twenty-six valuable minutes gone. Result nil. But you're wrong.'

'You could scarcely expect,' said Mr. Mervyn, 'in twenty-six minutes—'

'A natural mistake,' said Bobby Sebright, 'natural in a man ignorant of the training afforded by our New York journalism. I have here—' (he drew a notebook from his pocket) 'an impression gathered from the surrounding scenery, more particularly that section of it which comes in view after climbing Sally May's boundary wall. I propose to cable this impression to New York as soon as I light on your post-office. It will enlighten our politicians some, and tend to clear away the misapprehensions of the general public. Would you care to hear it ?'

'I should like to, very much,' said Mr. Mervyn politely. He was not quite sure what Bobby Sebright was talking about ; but he felt attracted by the young man. Exuberant vitality is one of the most attractive things there is to those who are growing old. Wordsworth felt this when he wrote about 'the wantonness of heart' of a joyous band of schoolboys—a passage which Mr. Mervyn often quoted to Delia when Sergeant Ginty's sons were particularly annoying.

'Britishers mistaken,' read Bobby Sebright, 'in wanting to retain franchise. No dividends possible.'

'Franchise?' said Mr. Mervyn.

The word, so he understood, meant the power of voting; a blessing much desired, he believed, by clever women; but quite unappreciated by him. He indeed possessed a double franchise, two votes, being an elector of Dublin University, but he had never used or wanted to use either of them. If Bobby Sebright used the word in the same sense the Britishers were unquestionably mistaken in wanting to retain the thing. It could be no use to them.

'On our side,' said Bobby Sebright, 'franchise means sole right of running street cars, electric light, telephones and general public conveniences granted by State Congress or other representative authority in return for considerations of value given by applicant financiers to ward bosses. See?'

'No,' said Mr. Mervyn, 'I don't.'

'Don't you run away with the notion that my cable appears in New York Press as read to you. That's where the assistant editor earns his salary. He sits down to those two statements of mine and inspires into them until they swell. He produces an article of the length required, with cross-headings. I'd like your opinion now, Mr. Mervyn, on that subject of dividends. Can this kind of show be made to pay? Can it cover expenses under proper management?'

Bobby Sebright looked round him. He seemed to be reckoning up the commercial possibilities of scattered grey stones, of heath-covered hill-sides, of brawling streams, of patches of fluttering bog cotton and fragrant thickets of bog myrtle, of 'the lights and shades which marched and countermarched about the hills.'

'Do you mean this place?' said Mr. Mervyn.

Bobby Sebright waved his hand comprehensively. Even the two policemen, visible as tiny figures far along the road, seemed to be included in his view.

'The country generally,' he said, 'of which this section is a fair sample according to Sally May.'

'She thinks it can,' said Mr. Mervyn.

'I have heard of that scheme. It strikes me as speculative, Mr. Mervyn. I'm not prepared to say but that, properly advertised, the idea may have money in it. Sally May is a fool; but she gets a notion now and then that's worth thinking of. As a holiday resort things might move a bit in this neighbourhood if run on religious and artistic lines. It's a novelty. Folks are accustomed to holidays, and know all they want to know about religion and

art; but hitherto the three things have been kept separate. Sally May's notion is to mix them. That's so?'

This seemed to Mr. Mervyn a very fair way of describing the Miracle Play. It increased his dislike for the project. 'It doesn't seem to me,' he said, 'a right thing to do.'

'I rather gathered from Sally May,' said Bobby Sebright, 'that you objected on artistic grounds. I don't set any excessive value on art myself, though I admit that it has its uses. But it occurs to me that if this drama is run on what is generally understood to be the most elevated lines your objection ought to vanish away. Now I've studied some on the question of dramatic art when I was running the theatrical criticism department of my paper last fall. I see that the regular ballet and musical comedy chorus work wouldn't do for the public you're out after, but I'm of opinion, and so is Sally May, that by proper attention to costume and by the use of select words culled from the genuine writings of the great Elizabethan literary men an effect may be produced which will not jar the most sensitive taste.'

'That's not my objection at all,' said Mr. Mervyn. 'She has always misunderstood me about that. Perhaps I haven't made my meaning quite plain, but——'

'Miss Delia Mervyn confirmed my impression,' said Bobby Sebright, 'that you were against the scheme on the grounds of high art, mistrusting the capacity of Sally May. But it doesn't matter any way. The point we have to consider before we go into the scheme is what your objections are worth stated in terms of dollars. Now, don't you bristle up if I put it straight to you. Are you one of the bosses of this section? How do you stand with the ring which controls the votes? Can you arrange for a vocal expression of public opinion?'

'I don't think so,' said Mr. Mervyn; 'I don't really know. I am not sure that I understand what you mean. I never tried.'

'If you don't know whether you can or not you may take it from me as a fact that you can't, and in that case your objection to the scheme won't matter one cent to Sally May. I respect you for it, but don't you make any mistake about the value of your opinion. It isn't of any value.'

'I know that,' said Mr. Mervyn. 'I've felt that all along; but Father Roche——'

'He's a smart man, according to Sally May. He sees dollars at the far end.'

'But he doesn't like it. In fact——'

'Are his objections artistic or are they business?'

'He doesn't want to be used as an advertisement on lemonade bottles,' said Mr. Mervyn. 'In fact he's gone to bed and sent for his bishop.'

'Bishop head boss?'

'Oh no, certainly not. At least, I suppose from some points of view you might speak of him as that. But I hope that we may be able to do without the bishop. We are thinking of holding a public meeting to-night to protest against the play. If we forward an unanimous resolution——'

'Now that's sense,' said Bobby Sebright. 'Sally May won't buck against public opinion. We're a democratic country, Mr. Mervyn. We don't lie down and wag our tails because a bishop or any other kind of lord tells us we ought. But when we find that a boss, either bishop or trust magnate, has his finger on the valve of the steam whistle, and can make citizens of any State squeal, or go hush-a-bye, according to his fancy, then we take off our hats to that boss and invite him to trample. That's democracy, and Sally May knows it. You show me that the voice of the almighty people is against this essay in dramatic art, and I'll undertake that Sally May climbs down and squirms pleasantly. I don't mind owing to you that I quite hope you'll succeed. I find that Sally May expects me to act as Press agent and to run the advertising end of the business, and I'm not keen on coming in. In an ordinary way I don't ever shy at taking on an extra contract; but I see that this proposition of Sally May's will require some booming to get it properly on the market. I haven't the time and I'm not sure enough about the dividends.'

'Perhaps,' said Mr. Mervyn, 'you'd be so good——'

He stopped and looked doubtfully at Bobby Sebright. He had a request to make and did not feel sure how it would be received. The young man before him seemed to be well disposed. He certainly spoke in a frank and friendly way, and yet Mr. Mervyn hesitated.

'Anything I can do for you,' said Bobby, 'you can reckon on as done, unless it amounts to a crime. I like you, Mr. Mervyn. You're a man of a kind I don't run up against every day. I reckon your type has rather died out in America. Unassuming merit is your speciality. Our civilisation hasn't room for it. The violet gets walked on, not having any wire in its stalk; whereas

the silk-petalled azalea flourishes in the hat of the young lady who patronises an expensive artist in head ornament. No one tramples on it. That's why I'm inclined to cherish you. You're a work by one of the Old Masters, and anything I can do for you I will.'

'Thanks,' said Mr. Mervyn; 'it's very kind of you to speak like that. What I thought of asking was——'

Again he hesitated.

'If it's a crime,' said Bobby, 'I'm not prepared to take it on. In an ordinary way I shouldn't hesitate, but I haven't been long enough in these islands to have gotten a proper grip upon your legal system; and from what I have heard your prisons aren't exactly up-to-date hotels.'

'I wasn't thinking of anything the least criminal.'

'Then don't hesitate. Ventilate your request.'

'I merely wish to suggest that it would be better not to mention the meeting in the village this evening at Druminawona House.'

'To Sally May or the young lady?'

'To neither.'

Mr. Mervyn spoke quite decisively. Delia had deserted him. Like Biddy the grey pony, she had yielded to the fascination of Mrs. Dann. He felt that she was not to be trusted.

'I don't deny,' said Bobby, 'that you've got me on a raw place. There are other things, Mr. Mervyn, that I'd have promised with greater cheerfulness. It goes against me to keep that meeting a secret from Sally May. If she'd heard of it, she'd have attended and she'd have added quite a bit to the interest of the demonstration. It would have gratified me to have seen her opposing your resolution.'

'But you won't tell her,' said Mr. Mervyn anxiously.

'I've passed my word and I'll stand to it. And the block you've put on intercourse with Miss Mervyn shall be respected. Your daughter, Mr. Mervyn, is a young lady of remarkable innocence and simplicity. I'm not a stained-glass-window white-robed saint, but I'd hesitate to contaminate the mind of your daughter with a guilty secret.'

'I don't think it's exactly guilty,' said Mr. Mervyn uneasily.

'It would be,' said Bobby. 'You may take my word for it. It would be if communicated to your daughter. Once in possession of that secret she'd be obliged to dissimulate. While holding confidential intercourse with Sally May she'd be aware that silence was equivalent to deliberate deceit. She'd be placed in a difficult position; and I don't see how she could escape from it without

losing that innocence which irresistibly reminds me of an arum lily.'

'I'm afraid that it may be very inconvenient for you to attend the meeting. My sister-in-law dines, I believe, at half-past seven and——'

'Dinner is a consideration which doesn't jog the balance of the scales when duty is in the opposite pan. It doesn't weigh in worth a feather, and any way I had figured on dining with you.'

CHAPTER XIV.

MR. MERVYN gasped. The reception of a guest of any sort in the rectory at Druminawona was a very rare event. Once a year one of his clerical brethren—a kindly man who held the important office of rural dean—spent half of a day with Mr. Mervyn. It was his business to gather information about the condition of the parish for the use of the bishop. But of his visit there was always ample notice. Delia had time to make Æneas Sweeny kill chickens. She and Onny Donovan between them made custard out of eggs laid by the mother of the chickens. The rural dean feasted royally and Mr. Mervyn did not grudge him his food. But Bobby Sebright invited himself to a meal without giving any notice at all. And he invited himself to late dinner. The rural dean ate his chicken at half-past one o'clock.

If Delia were at home—but Delia was not. If even Onny Donovan could be counted on—but it was very unlikely that Onny would leave the pleasant company of Jamesy Casey before nine o'clock. Mr. Mervyn remembered that she seemed to be enjoying herself behind the laurel-bush. The possibilities of such joy are not easily exhausted. She would certainly—and Mr. Mervyn had not the heart to blame her—find a walk with Jamesy a pleasanter thing than cooking a dinner in the rectory kitchen.

Bobby Sebright watched the shadows of deep perplexity gather on Mr. Mervyn's face. He was too quick a reader of character to suppose that the gentle old clergyman was an inhospitable churl. He guessed at the nature of the difficulties.

'Don't you worry yourself about the aspic for the quails,' he said, 'or let the thought of there being no ice for the champagne put you out any. A chunk of pie will satisfy my requirements.'

'But,' said Mr. Mervyn, 'there isn't any pie. We—the fact is we hardly ever have pie.'

'Last fall,' said Bobby cheerfully, 'I took up a contract for eight bright articles on the simple life. It was booming some at the time and editions of Thoreau's immortal work on Walden were selling off to our gilt-edged aristocracy in thousands, bound in pale green crushed morocco to indicate the vernal nature of the contemplative enterprise. My editor couldn't afford to be out of the boom, so I took hold and promised to write up to the requirements of the public. With a view to perfecting my information and putting on the colours strictly in accordance with nature, I tried the life.'

Mr. Mervyn looked puzzled. He felt that he was very stupid, but he could not grasp the connection between the eight bright articles on Thoreau, and the total want of dinner in his house. Bobby Sebright obligingly explained himself.

'For six week-ends,' he said, 'I erected my teepee on the bank of a mountain stream with a proper furnishing of umbrageous pines and other fittings. I hired a milch goat at the rate of half a dollar for the twenty-four hours and her rations. That goat and I had a grey blanket and a bag of maize flour between us. I didn't wear boots any more than she did, and the two of us watched the sun getting up out of his bed every Sunday and Monday morning. We communed together on eternal verities during the day, and there wasn't any ill-feeling between us except at milking time. She didn't seem to allow that I was an adopted kid, and I had some work smoothing things out with her. But the articles caught on. They were the real thing. After the publication of the second Thoreau's sales began to droop. When I finished the eighth, the general public swore off the simple life. Folks came to realise that artists in monuments for the deceased were the only people likely to benefit by the spread of the simple life if lived according to the strict rules. I mention this experience,' Bobby added, 'to explain to you that I'm not altogether dependent on pie.'

Mr. Mervyn realised that Bobby was boasting of a capacity to endure hardness. He became more hopeful. He could, at all events, offer bread, made of wheat flour, and he drew his milk supply from a cow, a gentle beast, submissive to Æneas Sweeny, which was fed on ordinary grass, and kept her thought on the eternal verities strictly to herself.

'If you really don't mind a very frugal meal,' said Mr. Mervyn, 'there are sure to be eggs and bread and butter. I shall be very glad——'

There are worse things than boiled eggs, eaten with bread and

butter. Bobby Sebright would have been perfectly content with them. But he was seized with the desire to give Mr. Mervyn as good a meal as possible. He had for the old clergyman the same benevolent feeling which prompts a good-natured uncle to offer a hungry schoolboy the free run of a pastrycook's shop.

'Say now, Mr. Mervyn,' he said. 'We'll just step round to the principal store in this town and buy up such canned goods and patent farinaceous products as the proprietor has in stock.'

Mr. Mervyn groped in his pocket. His fingers closed on a coin, but he did not feel certain whether it was a shilling or a halfpenny. At best it would be insufficient for the purchase of much canned food, but he remembered hopefully the penny packets of biscuits.

'We shall be able to get some biscuits,' he said.

'Sure,' said Bobby, 'and——'

He poured out the names of an amazing number of eatable things. Some of them were quite strange to Mr. Mervyn. Others, tinned tongues and sardines, he knew by repute, and suspected of being horribly expensive. He clutched the coin in his pocket and then let it drop from his fingers hopelessly. If it were a shilling and not a halfpenny, even if, by some wild chance, it turned out to be a golden sovereign, it would be insufficient to buy half the things which Bobby mentioned. He determined to pledge his credit to the uttermost, buy every luxury obtainable in Druminawona. It might take him years to pay the bill, but he would entertain Bobby Sebright properly. In the west of Ireland men still retain the savage virtue of hospitality; and, on occasion, are capable of running into debt cheerfully. Mr. Mervyn had been born east of the Shannon, but he had lived long enough in Connacht to have caught something of the spirit of the country.

He tried to assert himself and take up his proper position as host when they entered the shop. But Bobby Sebright quelled him.

'This,' he said, 'is my show. You're having this on me. You're providing the eggs, milk, and butter. I'm undertaking the looting of the store.'

He looked round him as he spoke. There did not appear to be very much to loot. On the floor beside the counter stood a large pile of biscuit tins and two sacks of flour. Bobby kicked the biscuit tins contemptuously. They appeared to be empty. Behind the counter stood Daniel Fogarty, smiling pleasantly. He had already received large orders from Mrs. Dann. The appearance in his shop

of another stranger gratified him very much. Mr. Mervyn had never been a very profitable customer, and Miss Mervyn had a habit—unworthy of a lady, in Fogarty's opinion—of scrutinising her bills very carefully. It was almost impossible to make the usual profit by charging her for a pound of sugar or a pot of marmalade which she had not actually received. But Mr. Mervyn's American relatives and friends seemed to be people of a different temper. Fogarty hoped that many more of them would come to Druminawona.

Behind Fogarty, ranged on two long shelves along the side of the shop, were rows of bottles. Bobby looked at them. Here and there was one of strange shape, labelled 'Ginger Cordial.' Here and there a tall thin bottle of raspberry-vinegar, or a squat flask of lemon-squash. But most of the bottles contained whisky. Bobby smiled.

'This State isn't dry,' he said. 'If you feel inclined for any of those fancy drinks, Mr. Mervyn, name it, and we'll have the bottle papered up. I'm giving an order for the native wine.' He pointed as he spoke to a large bottle of whisky.

Daniel Fogarty was not accustomed to having orders for whisky given in this blatant, shameless way. Irishmen drink whisky, of course, but they have the grace to be ashamed of it. The Temperance Movement has been gathering force for years, and when we want a bottle of whisky now we ask for it in a confidential whisper, leaning over the counter, and speaking into the shopkeeper's ear. We do not actually name the thing, but describe it as 'the same as you sent before.' A really sympathetic grocer will anticipate our order, gathering from our furtive expression that it is whisky we want, and sparing us the necessity of saying anything. Daniel Fogarty was further put out by hearing whisky called wine. He stared blankly at Bobby.

'John Jameson,' said Bobby, 'is, I understand, the local name of the article.'

Daniel Fogarty got down a bottle and wrapped it carefully in brown paper. Bobby found some packets of desiccated soup on the counter. He flicked them contemptuously with his finger.

'Is this all you have in the way of portable provisions?' he asked.

Daniel Fogarty looked inquiringly at Mr. Mervyn. He smiled feebly.

'Haven't you sardines?' he asked.

Daniel Fogarty realised that a great opportunity had come to him. He had, stored in a packing-case under the counter, a number of tins. They had been forced on him a year before by a very pushing commercial traveller to whom he owed a large bill. He had never thoroughly investigated them, knowing that food in tins is unsaleable in places like Druminawona. Bobby Sebright was a stranger. It was possible that he might be willing to buy strange things. Fogarty dragged out the packing-case. He laid on the counter, one after the other, a tin of anchovy paste, another which professed to contain a mixture of chicken and ham, a bottle of sauce which boasted to being an aid to digestion, a tinned tongue and a very large tin of preserved pears. Bobby Sebright ordered them all to be parcelled up.

There was some difficulty in making up the bill when the time came for paying it. Mr. Mervyn's wish that the things should be charged to his account was overruled by Bobby and ignored by Fogarty. He wanted to open an account with Bobby Sebright, and displayed the greatest dislike of being paid in cash. Bobby was firm. He laid down a sovereign on the counter, and asked for change.

'I wouldn't like to be telling a lie to you,' said Fogarty. 'I wouldn't tell a lie to any one, let alone a friend of Mr. Mervyn's. What I say is, what I've never done telling the children is this: it's better to speak the truth even if you lose by it in the end.'

'I admire that spirit,' said Bobby, 'but I don't see why those high principles should interfere with my paying for what I buy.'

'And it's ten to one I would be telling you a lie,' said Fogarty, 'if I was to name a price for the goods on the counter. I don't know the price of them, and that's the truth, for the invoice that came along with them has got lost on me.'

Bobby Sebright got out his notebook, and wrote rapidly.

'Local colour,' he said to Mr. Mervyn. 'Worth money in a descriptive sketch. Business methods of the Western Britisher. Invoice lost. Goods unpriced.'

'How would it be now,' said Fogarty, 'if I was to say ten shillings for the lot? The last thing I'd like would be to be overcharging you, and if there's to be a loss to any one it's better that I'd be the one to bear it.'

'Including the bottle of whisky?' said Bobby.

Fogarty eyed him cautiously. Bobby returned his gaze with a stare of perfect innocence.

'It's joking you are,' said Fogarty. 'Sure the whisky's five shillings by itself, and whisky's a thing I do know the price of.'

Bobby made another entry in his notebook.

'As near as I can figure it out,' he said, 'the total value of those canned provisions is about one dollar; but I'll give you the ten shillings you're asking. This illustration of your national methods of encouraging the stranger to trade with you is worth the balance to me. The American business public will appreciate this sketch. It'll be bright and replete with suggestive fact.'

Daniel Fogarty appeared to be entirely unmoved. In his heart he was not a little proud of the impression which he had made on the American stranger, a member of a nation notorious for its astuteness in business matters. He was also pleased to think that he was to be the subject of an article in a newspaper. A free advertisement is as welcome as it is rare. But, like all Irishmen, Fogarty had the manners of a gentleman. He made up his parcel without giving any sign of the pleasure he felt. It was only after he had tied the last knot in the string that he pointed out to Bobby his name and address printed in large black letters on the paper.

'In case you might be wanting it at any future time,' he said.

Bobby laid down a sovereign on the counter. As he did so Father Roche entered the shop.

The priest went straight to Mr. Mervyn, took him by the arm and led him out of earshot of Daniel Fogarty, to a corner of the shop. He was evidently upset about something. Under ordinary circumstances he would have taken some notice of the stranger. Curiosity would have made him try to find out who Bobby Sebright was. Courtesy, habitual with him, would have led him to postpone his own business until he had said words of warm welcome to a man whom he had never seen before. But on this occasion he took no notice of Bobby at all.

'Mr. Mervyn,' he said, speaking in a hoarse and agitated whisper, 'I'm annoyed, so I am, with the people of the parish. I haven't been as much annoyed since the first day I came among them. I wouldn't be as much annoyed if the half of them were to refuse to pay their dues, and that's what they'll be coming to soon if they go on as they're going.'

'What's happened?' said Mr. Mervyn.

'Would you believe it?—you would not, nor no man would: but there isn't one in the place will come to the meeting to protest against the insult to the religion of the people of Ireland that the

American lady is trying to perpetrate. I don't know what the bishop will say when he hears it.'

'Surely—surely, if you ask them to—they'd never refuse?'

'Wouldn't they? Just you listen now till I ask Daniel Fogarty. He's one that I haven't asked yet, and you'll hear what he says.'

Father Roche turned round to face Daniel Fogarty. As he did so he caught sight of Bobby Sebright.

'Tell me now,' he said to Mr. Mervyn, 'who's that young fellow that's leaning on the counter? I don't know did I ever set eyes on him before.'

'His name's Bobby Sebright,' said Mr. Mervyn. 'He's an American journalist, a nephew—I think he said a nephew—of Mrs. Dann.'

'Another Yank,' said Father Roche, 'and it's Yanks that's playing the mischief with the people of this country. I'm not meaning anything disrespectful to any friend of yours, Mr. Mervyn. But what I say is this, wherever there's a returned Yank you'll find the minds of the people stirred up to be disrespectful to the clergy. Come on now, till you see what sort of an answer we'll get from Daniel Fogarty.'

'Mr. Mervyn,' said Bobby Sebright, 'will you introduce me to your reverend friend?'

Mr. Mervyn did so, a little nervously. Bobby gave the priest no chance of expressing his dislike of Americans.

'I am proud to meet you, sir,' he said. 'I understand that you're the principal boss of this neighbourhood and keep the votes of the citizens in your pocket. Sally May Dann, the lady who has recently come here, bursting with philanthropic plans for the advancement of this country, is relying on you, sir.'

'She needn't,' said Father Roche, 'for I'm not inclined to support her. I don't deny that she means well—'

'She does,' said Mr. Mervyn. 'She's exceedingly kind-hearted.'

'But what she proposes,' said Father Roche, 'doesn't suit.'

He turned from Bobby Sebright and addressed Fogarty.

'Daniel,' he said, 'I am calling a meeting this evening at eight o'clock in the schoolroom, and the purpose of the meeting is to make it clear that the people of this parish without distinction of religion or politics are opposed to the making of soda-water out of the Holy Well, or play-acting of a kind that the bishop wouldn't approve of, in our midst.'

Daniel Fogarty shuffled his feet and fiddled nervously with the

string of the parcel before him. Without seeming to notice what he was doing he swept Bobby Sebright's sovereign into the till. Father Roche had no right to complain of any sign of truculent disrespect in his attitude so far. He appeared to be exceedingly uncomfortable and cowed.

'What do you say now, Daniel?' said Father Roche. 'Will you come to the meeting and support your priest? Speak up now, and speak plain.'

'As for going against the clergy,' said Daniel Fogarty, 'and yourself in particular, Father, not to mention the bishop, it's what I wouldn't do; and no man has the right to say it of me that ever I did. You know that, Father, and Mr. Mervyn knows it, and everybody knows it. Amn't I the father of a long family, and is there one of them that's ever been neglectful of his religious duties? There is not. Many's the time I've said to the children: "Let yees all be attentive to your religion and mind what the priest says to ye even if yees was to lose money by it." Though I knew well they wouldn't lose money by it, for there's no better friend to the people than the priest, and he wouldn't see e'er a one at the loss of money.'

He smiled in an ingratiating way at Father Roche as he spoke, but the priest was in no way mollified.

'You're ready enough to talk, Daniel Fogarty,' he said, 'and to talk smooth and nice; but what I'm wanting from you now isn't talk. Will you come to the meeting or will you not?'

Bobby Sebright got out his notebook again. He stood, pencil in hand, waiting for Fogarty's answer.

'Our feeling,' said Mr. Mervyn mildly, 'is that the play Mrs. Dann wants us to act is not exactly—'

Fogarty interrupted him. Mr. Mervyn's explanations were all well enough; but Mr. Mervyn did not really matter. He was not a valuable customer.

'I'd come to the meeting,' he said, 'and I'd say whatever it was that had to be said if it was any other night but this night. I'm terribly busy, so I am, and herself is sick in her bed, so she can't be any help to me; so you'll excuse me, Father.'

'I will not excuse you,' said Father Roche, 'and what's more I won't listen to the way you're talking. You're not busy to-night any more than another night; and I met your wife with the baby in her arms, and she was looking as well as ever I saw her.'

'Father,' said Fogarty, speaking in a kind of deprecating whine, 'you won't ask me to do what might mean a loss to me. Your

reverence would be the last man to stand in the way of the people of Druminawona making a little money. The Lord knows we want it. You wouldn't do the like and no more would the bishop.'

'I would,' said Father Roche—'I would, and what's more I do, when there's talk of Judas Iscariot, and my own picture on the outside of a bottle. It's not decent.'

'I don't know, Father,' said Fogarty, 'do you rightly understand the way things are. Take my own case, now. There's no reason now in the wide world why the place I'm standing in at the present moment shouldn't be an hotel. There's room enough in it and there'd be more room if herself and me and the children was to go out to the house at the back of the yard where the cows is presently, and that's what we'd do if we could turn the premises into an hotel.'

'You'd sell your soul,' said Father Roche, 'for a five-pound note.'

'I would not sell my soul,' said Fogarty, 'and there'd be more than five pounds in it; there'd be more than fifty pounds in it, if the American lady was to bring people down to the locality the way they're after saying that she will. That's what I'm thinking of, Father, the good of the parish; and it's a curious thing, so it is, that you'd be talking to me about selling my soul.'

'Listen to him,' said Father Roche,—'listen to him, Mr. Mervyn; and it's the same with all of them.'

'Gentlemen,' said Bobby Sebright, closing his notebook, 'it occurs to me that the public meeting is likely to be a frost. I own I'm disappointed. I'd have liked to have reported the proceedings. The New York public would have been interested. That meeting would have been a scoop for my paper. But I'm not complaining. Sally May Dann was right when she fetched me down to Druminawona. I'm getting the real thing, valuable stuff. The insight I'm acquiring into the religion of this neighbourhood——'

'It's the fault of you and the like of you,' said Father Roche, 'coming here and upsetting the minds of the people——'

'Excuse me, sir,' said Bobby Sebright,—'excuse my pointing out to you that you're mistaken in your estimate of my intentions.'

'Mr. Sebright,' said Mr. Mervyn, 'is anxious to help us. Perhaps he may be able to suggest something that may help us out of our difficulty.'

'If that's so,' said Father Roche, 'let him suggest. I'll be glad to hear him.'

'Come right along,' said Bobby, 'come right along with me, both

of you reverend gentlemen. We'll sit round Mr. Mervyn's festive board and discuss the situation while we eat the miscellaneous tinned goods provided by Mr. Fogarty.'

He tucked the parcel under his arms as he spoke. Then he turned suddenly to Fogarty.

'I kind of fancy,' he said, 'that there's something due to me out of that sovereign I laid down before you.'

'Did I not give you your change?' said Fogarty.

Bobby Sebright looked at him with twinkling eyes.

'I admire your business acumen,' he said, 'and I'll compliment you some when I'm describing the interview in the New York Press; but there's five shillings coming to me out of that till of yours.'

'That's the way with you,' said Father Roche. 'You begin with disrespect for the clergy, and the next thing you do is try to cheat a strange gentleman out of his change.'

Father Roche was wrong. Daniel Fogarty had all his life been anxious to cheat anyone who could possibly be cheated. Never before had he found it necessary to resist the will of a priest. If there was any connection between the two sins it was not that suggested by Father Roche. Disrespect to the clergy may have been a consequence of a long course of petty swindling, the final crisis of his spiritual degradation. The willingness to cheat did not follow a decay of reverence.

Fogarty fumbled in his till and produced five shillings. To this, after a moment of hesitation he added a penny.

'Discount,' he said, 'for prompt cash, and I wish everybody paid what he owed as quick as you do.'

'Thank you,' said Bobby, 'you encourage me to deal here regularly while in this locality.'

(To be continued.)

JOHN FARMER AT HARROW.

BEFORE I ever went in for the entrance examination at Harrow in 1873, the fame of her music master had reached my ears. He had not been at the school long, but had already made his name.

He was, I was told, a stickler for classical music, particularly Bach, which some people considered dry, but on the other hand such an enthusiast that he made you like it. No one who came across him could help being musical. All boys, he said, were really fond of music at the bottom; they only wanted showing, and the wonderful unison singing in Harrow Chapel (so I heard) proved the truth of his opinion.

On the strength of this information, I sedulously practised a little piece of Mendelssohn, all the classics I knew, and went to school fully prepared to be his very ardent disciple. The Harrow I went to was not the Harrow of this generation in which school songs have become a tradition. Everything musical was then in the making, and John Farmer was making it. Though a familiar figure on the Hill, he had not yet obtained that universal recognition which made music such a power at Harrow. I remember that when he asked me to breakfast a few days after my arrival, a self-appointed mentor actually told me that 'I oughtn't to go. He was not a real master.' It was an embarrassing position for a shy new boy, and I walked up and down the asphalt for some moments in doubt. Common sense however triumphed; I went, and enjoyed an hour of his fascinating humour, and came back more devoted than ever. I was in the enchanted land, of which I had dreamt before I came to Harrow. The night after I lay in bed discussing with the two boys in my room who was the cleverest master in the school. Dr. Butler and E. E. Bowen were both strongly supported, but I caused general amazement by advancing the claims of Farmer—'The others are all very well, I know, but he's the only genius among the masters.' I do not know now that I was wrong!

The problem that Farmer set himself was to make music reach every stratum of school society. To solve it, he invented the function called house-singing. Once a week, or afterwards once a fortnight, in the winter terms he came to every house, and made the boys sing popular songs in unison. He had some difficulty

at first in getting all the houses to fall in with his plan. 'When I first went up to the Grove, they used to throw boots at me from the windows in the dark.' Another legend related how the boys arranged an avalanche of lexicons on a tea-tray to disconcert him as he descended the pupil-room stairs. But Farmer stepped nimbly aside, hopped up on to the banisters, and let it pass, then went on and began as if nothing had happened. There was no stopping him; he soon gained his point, and house singing became a tradition. Then he fell to writing school songs, and in a moment the merit of the system was apparent. The school songs became an expression of school feeling; everybody knew them. Whether they made boys musical or no, they certainly became a wonderful bond of union among Harrovians. It is marvellous that he should have had the high spirits to make such a system possible—twelve houses and each to be visited once a fortnight! But his enthusiasm and jokes never failed, and that was his greatness. If they had, disorder would have set in, and house singing would have fallen into disrepute. But the majority of the boys thoroughly enjoyed these evenings. The scholar left his prose, and the lazy boy his brew without complaining, when the fag came round to say that Farmer was there. Down we tumbled into 'pupe,' the motley crew of cheerful rough-haired juniors, and grave and reverend seniors, which makes up a school house, and sat there waiting. In comes the great little man, for he was short of leg, though lusty and strong of figure. He is generally a bit late, and rather hot. Anyhow he is always in a hurry, for everything he did was done eagerly. As he enters, he stares blankly about the room for a moment through his spectacles: he always confessed to being desperately shy at first in company. It gave him (so he said) a 'plait' in his legs to cross a room with people in it. Soon however his eye catches some familiar face among the boys, and he is off.

'Where's the cricket captain "Joseph"?'¹

Farmer never knew anybody's name, but remembered him by what he could do. The captain of the house eleven is promptly produced by his grinning neighbours—'I was so afraid you might have taken to the flute and Sunday music,' he says with a mischievous glance over his spectacles. (The lowest depths of melancholy, you must know, according to Farmer, was the Hallelujah

¹ Farmer's use of this name was so extensive and peculiar that in a farewell speech Dr. Butler said it was sad to think that 'generations of Harrovians would now arise who knew not Joseph.'

Chorus played by two curates on a Sunday afternoon as a flute duet.) He next proceeds to call for the scholarship 'Joseph,' and violin 'Joseph,' who is the leading house musician. These are also produced to his satisfaction. Not that he cared much what had become of the musicians on these occasions as long as he found the cricket and football 'Josephs' in their places. The musicians he had anyhow: his business was to make friends of the Philistines. He knew that: and he had to do it by means of music alone; for in their school work and play he could take no part. If he adopted a pose, and favoured to a certain extent the athletic dignities, who shall blame him? Some of his strongest and most strenuous supporters scarcely knew one note from another, but pinned their faith to Harrow songs as the symbol of Harrow feeling. It is admirable to see his face alight with fun and mischief, as he passes his old jokes round, while his high cackling laugh provokes the house to merriment. Then he sits down to the harmonium, a wheezy little box of reeds, which defied even the mischievous fingers of schoolboys to get any fun out of it, and preludes for a moment to see 'what key he is in.' No one who has not heard John Farmer play that much-abused instrument can imagine what frisky music the harmonium was capable of under his ten fingers. Not only did he accompany songs admirably, but in the intervals played all kinds of bright and graceful dance music to amuse us. Strauss' 'Hommage aux dames mazurka,' the 'Blue Danube,' and other waltzes of the kind I remember well. New school songs too were often put on their trial here. He liked to see how boys took his tunes before he wrote them down.

But the house must not be kept waiting—'The March of the Men of Harlech' opens the ball, and the forty-odd boys launch into that schoolboy chorus, which makes up in energy what it lacks in tone.

'Men of Harlech, young and hoary,
Would you see your name in story?'

Then well-known boys are called upon for established favourites C—the captain of the football, who possesses a reedy tenor, sings:

'Then heigho chivy,
Hark forrard, hark forrard, tantivy;'

and M—, most delightful of boy baritones, gives a performance of

'Underneath the briny sea,' one of the first school songs, or sometimes of that beautiful song of Dr. Arne's, 'When Phoebus sinketh in the West,' which was his speciality.

Then a chorus for 'talkers' (i.e. those unfortunates who have no perceptible ear for a tune) is suggested, and the musically ragged regiment stand up with broad grins to sing 'The Old English Gentleman.' It is most comical to hear Farmer, his eyes dancing with mischief, giving them leads in crowing falsetto, while his hands slip from key to key in pursuit of their wandering intonation. The house roars with laughter as each 'talker' takes his verse solo in turn and undismayed, and all in the best humour on both sides. Some of them have indeed musical ideals of their own, which are unspeakably funny. Poor C—, what pathos he used to throw into 'Tom Bowling'! When he 'went aloft' at the end of the verse, his serious face was almost more than human nature could bear. How we roared with laughter, while John Farmer mopped his heated brow and repeated 'This is really delightful! most delightful!' Then he would call for 'John Peel'—performed with suitable hunting cries; the spirited dialogue of 'Ffairshon swore a feud' (introduced shortly before by a Scotch member of the house), or a German song, of which, I am bound to say, he was fonder than we were. The chorus ran, I think :

'Hurrah, lads, hurrah, the Germans are here,
The Germans are merry, they shout and they cheer.'

We always substituted 'smoke and drink beer'¹ to his private annoyance. But even so the performance was rather perfunctory; perhaps our patriotic souls were in doubt as to the policy of attributing such high qualities to the Germans. But the song was an exception; as a rule we appreciated his choice entirely. His gay laugh and ready humour completely dominated the company, while his eyes moved about the room and saw everything. If the boys got too noisy in one corner, he stared at them in his short-sighted way, and put the leader of the riot on for a solo. He never rebuked anyone, or spoke sourly; to do so on such an occasion would have been to provoke disorder. At the worst he called for a 'bell-tinker,' 'Forty years on' or some established favourite which was sure to secure a rousing chorus; and so the hour passed without a hitch

¹ A boy remembered that once other words (not of the best sort) were sung to the music; Farmer heard them, and a queer angry look flashed into his eyes, but he let it pass; he said nothing, he only looked at the two offenders.

from 'Men of Harlech' to 'Auld Lang Syne,' with which it concluded. Then Farmer bustled off perhaps to go through the same routine elsewhere with the same untiring energy.

But usually after house singing in our house, where he was very much at home, he went into the drawing-room and talked to the ladies. Here was a very different Farmer; still humorous, but when mounted on his hobby-horse a bit of a prophet—some people said lecturer, though we never found him tiresome; he was far too wise to exhibit this side of his character to boys. With ladies it was a different matter. When he had some subject very much at heart, he was always talking about it; repeating the same jokes and rehearsing the same interludes, until outsiders, who did not share in his enthusiasm, got tired of him and his music. But in this tiresome iteration John Farmer was scarcely at all to blame. He had a reputation as a humorist, and upon such occasions could hardly escape without going through the regular performance expected of him. At one time it was a series of little songs illustrating the popular taste of the English people.

First the ranter's song so popular at Nottingham :

'There's fust, hand second, hand third class,
There's room for hall, there's room for hall,
There's fust, hand second, hand third class,
For Je-ew and Gentile hand for hall.'

He gave it always with a curious snuffle on the word Jew, which represented to Nottingham minds 'the antiquity of the race, and the length of their noses.'

Next came 'Mr. Wimblicroft' with his moral ballad :

'Tell me not in mournful numbers
Life is but a hempty dream.'

In this the singer frowned so much, when he came to the second part in the minor, that the dogs 'howled in sympathy.' Other and more ambitious efforts of musicians belonging to the higher ranks of society followed. These I have forgotten, but Mr. Wimblicroft's name remains, because it became an adjective. Vulgar sentiment was Wimblicroft, and Farmer declared that this failing vitiated the greater part of English popular music. In later years he developed the Wimblicroft legend in greater detail. 'Mr. Wimblicroft' (he said) made money in lace at Nottingham, and determined to give his daughter the best of education. She was

sent to school at Brighton and played Chopin with all the second-hand airs and graces of her French music master. (Here came characteristic illustrations.) Old Mr. Wimblicroft had been a chapel man originally and used to sing lustily in the choir; but as he got richer, he and his wife left the chapel for the church. But he still subscribed to the chapel for the 'singing' seat; and every year the elders used to come and see him to collect his subscription. He always gave them a five-pound note—a note that 'crackled with charity.' One year an elder said to him: 'Mr. Wimblicroft, we are very grateful to you for your generosity, but we do regret that you no longer come to chapel.' To this the old man replied: 'So do I, my friend, but it is just this way. When I had one horse to my carriage, I could get round to the chapel; but when I got two horses, that second horse and my missis were too strong for me, and dragged me round to the church.' Farmer used to add: 'I have often thought of suggesting to the Archbishop of Canterbury to introduce a prayer into the Church Prayer Book. "God save us from the second horse." It has done more to ruin the family life of the middle classes than anything else.' 'Later on Mr. Wimblicroft lost his fortune, and was left with a "modest competence." His only occupation now was to go to market every day with an old crony, and choose the meat for dinner. Their hands would tremble over titbits.'

It was a characteristic point of his humour that it always had moral and social significance, if you could discern it. Even when he talked of music, the threads of discussion were sure to get mixed up with the higher issues of life. Farmer held that music could not be severed from them. As for the music he wrote, it might be music for children, but a musician could have no higher object than to make them happy, and give them generous thoughts. If he made fun of the benighted musical state of all classes of society, it was only because he meant his teaching to herald something better. He did not say so, because he was neither foolish nor conceited; but we his disciples standing round understood him to mean that, and faithfully believed that it should so come to pass; and again it must be said that we were not altogether wrong.

Quite outside the work he did at Harrow, there was his work in London, the so-called Harrow Music School. Then he was director of music in all the Girls' High School Company's schools. He traversed the country from end to end for personal inspection, as well as careful and detailed direction. It was on his initiative

that a sounder style of music was adopted. His enthusiasm gave the stimulus, which music in England has always so sorely needed, and I doubt if any one man's personality has been more effective for the purpose.

But we have wandered somewhat from the drawing-room, where we left Farmer explaining to the company why 'English middle class taste' was so terribly Wimblicroft.

'It's chiefly owing to the hymns. The curse of English music is four-part singing.'

This is almost too much for one young lady.

'I thought,' she says with deference, for she is no great musician, 'that in Yorkshire —'

'Oh, that's quite different. My guy, those mill hands,' with an appreciative chuckle, 'they can sing in the North. I meant in church. As John Blades of Nottingham used to say, "Some folks can't sing a tune without twisting it all ways about. They calls it bass, but Lordy, it ain't bass, nor any tune to it either."'

'Don't you want a choir at all then?'

'In cathedrals and such places they can sing as much as they like through their noses¹; but in places like Harrow Chapel, no. We can't have a choir singing "*We praise Thee, O Lord,*" while everyone else looks on and listens—and that's what they would have to do. Unison spoils harmony, and choirs spoil unison. What a school wants is great hymns like the German chorales; that's the real congregational music.'

But enough of these discussions; the company is anxious that he should play something. What? Oh, the 'Nursery Rhyme Quadrilles.' In those days he had just completed the first set. It was his first essay at writing music for children, and his imagination was as usual full of it. He had funny points to be explained in every figure; and as he sat there playing and singing in his inimitably enthusiastic way, always earnest but always humorous, I felt to the full the fascination which he exercised upon the Harrow world. None but the most obstinate of Philistines could resist it. The children adored him and his works at once. If I am not mistaken, the Quadrilles got into the pantomimes that year. How they must have shone out among the senseless jingle which was in those days considered good enough for the children's

¹ Farmer had always a strong objection to intoning, which is what he means by 'singing through their noses.'

carnival! For in everything that Farmer did, there was an unmistakable air of geniality and distinction, which preserves his simplest tunes from vulgarity. Farmer himself was delighted because some great bandmaster was to be set to orchestrate them. But he had not bargained for the result. His ideas of orchestral music were classical, and to his dismay the score was in the theatre-orchestra manner, with cornets, side drum, and bass trombone. Curiously enough, however, he came round very much to the same style of scoring himself in the end.

Originally, though the chief part of his music was written for children, it was not intended that it should be sung by them; on the contrary, all the resources of choir and orchestra in the grand style were to be employed to make his works appeal to their imagination. Unfortunately for this design, Farmer wrote during his Harrow years entirely for boys and among boys. His orchestra was made up of boys, and therefore he let everybody play everything (within limits) so as to make the notes secure. In this way his music came to be such as must be regarded as only fit to be sung by simple people like children. His art lay in the fact that what he wrote was perfectly suited for them, easy but not vulgar. His orchestration in like manner was simplified down into its lowest terms, so as to suit their powers. The old dreams of orchestral effect, which he had when he was writing, were abandoned bit by bit for simplicity's sake. So surely does the material in which a man works control his invention.

What an orchestra we were, to be sure, in those days, and how we enjoyed playing in it! Two boys at the piano, and one at the harmonium, kept us more or less together. Peiniger, the violin master, a magnificent player, endured much without a murmur, and played the first-violin part. There were three or four scrambling second violins; one viola, an old Harrovian, whom Farmer called the 'stationary sackbut'; one master 'cello; the bandmaster double-bass; two flutes, an occasional cornet, and a toothless old clarionet player, who copied music, and got plentiful abuse for his pains. This was John Farmer's orchestral experience, and I believe he enjoyed it as much as we did. 'My guy,' he would say as the motley crew came crashing through the coda of their symphony, 'there were some parrots flying about.' This was in delicate allusion to a Mr. Parrot of Nottingham, who, when he was asked if he couldn't play the clarionet part as written, said in a pet, 'No, but he could play h—ll with it.'

M. Masson, the French master, assisted with the double-bass at concerts. In his ardour he seemed to bow all the strings at once, 'like striking a whole box of matches on the first beat of every bar,' said Farmer. As the head of his instrument rested among the boys, when he laid it down, and they altered his pegs *ad libitum*, much could not be expected of him, but his appearance was a regular feature of our terminal concerts.

Farmer did not himself do much pianoforte teaching in the school, but he was always about the music-room, which was then just built for him, to stimulate the pupils. I never remember him severe or annoyed, but he could assert himself if necessary. One day when he was playing over 'Soldiers of Christ, arise,' a new oratorio number, which he had just finished, a rather sententious boy said with a patronising air, 'I think you have caught the meaning of the words admirably.' Whereupon Farmer swung himself round on the piano-stool, surveyed him through his spectacles, and then, ejaculating 'Thank God for that at all events,' swung himself back again. He never reprov'd boys severely, nor took an active part in enforcing discipline. It was outside his beat. He kept things straight by humour and enthusiasm. It was quaint to hear him say, talking of an old friend who had just got into trouble for swearing, 'After all, he isn't *half so good at it* as Bottles.' 'Bottles,' an old Crimean navy, well known at Harrow, had lately attracted public attention by attacking the headmaster, who had put him out of bounds, with floods of bad language poured from a position of vantage on the top of the high wall of schoolyard. With another characteristic expression of his quaint humour, he used sometimes to get us in to practise Handel on wet days 'to keep us from becoming Roman Catholic.' Farmer was a born partisan, and divided the world on every score into two contending parties. To his mind 'Roman Catholic' meant mystic, sentimental religion; whereby a man gives obedience to what he does not understand, he does not know why. On the other side he set his own sturdy form of Protestantism, which required that everything should be discussed by the power of reason, and become a matter of practice. 'God gave me my mind,' he used to say; 'I've got nothing else. He wouldn't have given it me if He hadn't meant me to use it; so I intend to, even in matters of religion.'

For his politics, his father, according to his own story told to Matthew Arnold, had been a Nottingham Chartist, and he himself in early youth had been out in the streets, throwing stones at the

military, so that he was naturally an eager Radical. The only occasion on which I heard him regret the boys' presence at Harrow was during a general election; but then the school was Conservative almost to a man, and he hated to feel himself in such an unpopular minority.

In lighter vein, he divided the whole world, things animate and inanimate, into Oxford and Cambridge. The distinction is impossible to define, examples only can be given. The violin was 'Cambridge,' the trumpet 'Oxford'; the doctor 'Cambridge,' the soldier 'Oxford.' We used to discuss which our various friends were; he professed himself 'Oxford' or 'Cambridge' in turn, according to the day and his humour. With much of this kind of joking older people were bored. It was unintelligible to the uninitiated, and repeated too often. But it must be remembered that Farmer was a boys' man; his humour suited us. One of his great qualities was the power to find the best thing for the work he had to do. His eager nature understood its conditions, and lived into them perfectly. If he failed in some measure to gain the same recognition with men, who can wonder at it? With old Harrovians always his influence was far-reaching. On all Founder's Day meetings at Harrow, a permanent feature of the day's celebrations was Farmer's Tobacco Parliament in the evening. In the large music-room at his house were to be found dozens of old boys, singing, talking and laughing, listening to his songs and stories. 'That's something like a "bell-tinker,"' he would say as the maturer voices made the chorus resonant, worthy of 'old Thunder-guts' (a great bass, whose mighty organ was familiar at Harrow); 'I wish the boys could sing like that.' Then he would fall to telling stories of his youth, so humorous and so pathetic that I have seen stout sober men turn from laughter to real tears at the hearing.

There was the old fiddler, whom he used to accompany on the harp at dances when he was a boy. 'A real musician he was. How his eye gleamed when I slipped a new harmony into the accompaniment. "That's the way, my boy; you've got the sense of it," he would say; and I was prouder of his approval than of any other praise I got, because he understood—yes, he really understood. Many's the night I've been out playing with him, though I got into trouble at home for it. One night I came home late, and the door was fast. "Never mind, John," he said, "I'll find you somewhere to sleep," and he gave me a bed by the fireside in his own cottage. But there was no covering—"Just wait a moment, and I'll bring

something to put over you." When the light was out, he came and covered me up warm, so that I slept all night like a top. Lo and behold! when I woke next morning, it was his wife's own petticoat that was over me. He hadn't anything else to give.' He was a born raconteur and his stories and imaginings accounted for much of the spell that he exercised on his surroundings. In later years the new speech-room and the organ made larger meetings for school singing possible. Also there were organ recitals on Sunday for the school. Farmer did not play regular organ music, nor did he play like the usual organist, but in a way of his own. He had no great technique, but he gave the instrument a lightness and elegance which is as rare as it was effective. It was his great means of teaching us to know and love the classics. Boys used to go into Chapel specially early to hear the voluntary. Beethoven's symphonies and overtures were his staple. How often have I sat spellbound, listening to the opening of his violin concerto! But he played everything *en amateur* from piano scores. I remember his asking Mr. Hill, who was putting up the speech-room organ, whether he thought it would be more satisfactory if he got a regular organist down to open it. 'Not while you play it as you do, sir,' was the answer. 'You have a way of your own, and it pleases me as much as any playing I know.' It had somehow the same kind of simple geniality and delicate rhythm which was to be found in his own music. He generally played easy things: indeed he did not hesitate to leave out whole sections of symphony movements if he couldn't make them sound effective; but all that he played sounded delightful. I am sure that those Sunday-evening voluntaries in Chapel, and later the speech-room recitals, were the beginning of many boys' taste for good music.

I am afraid, though, that it was his limitations partly which made him so impatient of organists and learned professors—'pedal kickers and beavers' as he called them. And in this way not unnaturally he earned a considerable amount of ill-will among members of his own profession. And yet it would be absurd to imagine that a man with Farmer's high ideals, the friend of artists like Joachim and Madame Schumann, could have had any disrespect for the fruits of industry and high learning. It was only his intensely human point of view which made him distrust the academical side of English music. He thought that mere skill was often put in the place of feeling. He used also to speak with contempt of the 'opus' Josepha, people who talked of works by their opus

number, and the 'score women' who were then beginning to frequent classical concerts, score in hand. He was so much in the habit of considering himself as a voice crying in the wilderness that he forgot how many other excellent prophets the world, even in England, contains. In his enthusiasm he seemed to claim the love of the great masters as a thing peculiar to himself. Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms were the gospel which it was his chief object to bring home to Englishmen, and the distinctive feature of the Harrow music school was that the pupils were set to play Bach instead of exercises. It was a sound idea, but not likely to prevail long without some strong personal stimulus.

Another product of his untiring energy was the instrument he invented. For a year or more a model stood in the music-room, and experiments were often made with it. It consisted of strings set in vibration by means of harmonium reeds and stopped in the ordinary way on a finger-board. 'They won't want half the double-basses in the orchestra when they get my wind fiddle,' he used to say, but the original orchestral idea never became a reality, though it was worked out in another way.

Such things were not his real work in the world, though they serve to show his versatility. His great work was in spreading the influence of music. In his old age Farmer said, 'I have kicked two bases' (at Harrow we talk of 'bases' not 'goals') 'in my lifetime. I should like to kick another before I die.' The first was of course his success in making music popular at Harrow. Other music-masters have obtained greater results from musical boys, or from the select body of school musicians who form choir and orchestra, but none ever succeeded, so far as I know, in making music a means of school expression except Farmer. We have no spirit of national music; we regret it; Farmer made one for Harrow. We have few songs which can be called in any sense national; Farmer invented the right type of school tune, and carried it through the whole series of songs, developing the same ideal with uniform success. How much of the credit is due to the poet Bowen, and how much to the composer, must remain a matter of opinion. It was one of those happy partnerships for which the world may be thankful. The songs remain to this day, the ideals which other authors and composers strive to emulate. To make quotations from them here would be useless; many of them are household words. The tunes are remarkable for the same qualities which I have mentioned above: a genial warmth combined with delicate gaiety which never

descends to commonness, a sort of Schumann touch combined with something of the grace of Brahms' waltzes. They are distinguished also by a spontaneity which reflects his method of writing: 'I wait over the composition, till the tune comes into my head with a rush all at once; then I write it down.' 'Forty years on,' for example, was composed, according to his account, in the organ-loft during the course of a tedious sermon, and written down directly after.

Farmer's music was not all school songs. At one time he brought out a good deal of instrumental music, among other things four or five septets. As far as my boyish recollection goes, they were charming music. At the time he could talk of nothing else—they were to be his nine symphonies, the work of his life; but many years after, when I asked him to lend me the scores, he said: 'I can't. I never wrote them out. I have the other parts somewhere, but the piano part I improvised.' I suppose they are now gone beyond recall. Most of the tunes, I believe, he used up elsewhere in 'Cinderella,' the children's opera, especially. This and the children's oratorio, 'Christ and his soldiers,' are his chief works. Simple as the music is, it is interesting to remember the loving thought he spent on details, and the way he used to talk of them. When he was writing the symphony to 'O come, all ye faithful,' he said: 'When the children hear that, they will know that the fiddlers really are glad.' Again, in the last phrase of 'Hark, a thrilling voice is sounding,' which runs, 'Christ is nigh, it seems to say,' the bass part does not enter till the last 'it seems.' 'Ah,' said Farmer, 'the bass was a hard-headed fellow: he wasn't easy to convince, but he understood at last.'

Some of us will not easily forget the first complete performance of the oratorio in speech room, the headmaster's speech, the gathering of old boys. It was not the interest of the music alone which made the day memorable, though that was enhanced for many of us by the fact that we had followed it in its inception and gradual completion. It was the sight of the composer, his face radiant with enthusiasm and happiness, which made an impression upon all who were present.

A similar occasion was the meeting in the Vaughan Library, when a presentation was made to him on leaving Harrow. How he turned from one side to the other peering at the eager faces through the glasses which were blurred with tears. How he stammered out words of thanks, couched in the peculiar slang in which he always took refuge when excited.

'You know what a "plait" I feel, standing up here in front of you fellows: I never could talk. That's not my line.' (I am afraid this was hardly literally true.) 'Anything I say sounds so "purr" compared to what I want to say. I wish I was one of those "used" Josephs, who——' and then he fairly broke down, while we cheered.

It is there that memory best recalls him, standing on the dais in the Vaughan Library window, for all the world like the well-known watercolour of Franz Schubert. The same stumpy figure, the same crisp dark hair, getting sparse, the same sensitive face, the same eternal spectacles, and the same enthusiasm in appearance and action, which we are fain to ascribe to the immortal songwriter. Such was his personality that as he went hurrying about the Hill, the little round figure, with the round face wreathed in smiles, seemed to pervade the whole street. His arms, which he spread out as he walked, made him look so wide that he almost filled the footpath. It was this ceaseless energy that brought him to his end. He could not rest. Many years afterwards I saw him at Oxford. He had suffered a slight stroke, and by doctor's advice had been sent to Yorkshire to be quiet and get strong. He occupied his whole time there in making music with the people of the place, with the result that he suffered a second stroke in the organ-loft at Balliol.

He was now sitting in his chair in the garden as cheerful and unconcerned as ever. 'I am afraid I can't get up, for both my legs are gone, "Joseph."' And then we talked of old days, many things, and I hummed the air of a tune to him, which I wished to recall. 'Look me in the face,' he cried; 'you can't do that and hum. I never knew but one man who could: the old Doctor, he could; he used to smile and look me in the face, when he was running over the Sunday hymns. Eh, but I used to give him sad turns now and again, if it hadn't been for the human eyebrow. You remember the theological eyebrow? I used to see it drawn down as grim as death, when I came to him with my nonsense. I was always wanting something fresh; but after a bit the human eyebrow would begin to quiver, and I knew it was all right then.'

'Writing, oh yes! I'm busy enough, but I can't get on so fast as I used. D'you remember old Delamotte, the drawing-master, with his bassoon, in the old days?' and Farmer goes off in a little crow of chuckles at the remembrance. 'Well, I was thinking of him, and the part I wrote for him in the "Tercentenary March." We practised it all the term, and then in the concert

he never played it after all. Some one crossed it out at the last moment. I was very annoyed, I remember. I'm like that. I've been thinking and working so long at this thing I'm doing, and now I believe I'll never get it done.'

It was as he feared. His writing had already become uncertain ; soon after his pen faltered, and he laid it down for ever, but not before his work in this world had been well done. A great work it was ; let no one be in doubt about that. He had not trained many great artists ; he had not succeeded in obtaining extraordinary results from meagre material ; but he had made music a popular means of expression to a great school of English boys. He had shown what a close bond of union music may become, and I hardly think that another Englishman could say the same. He had kicked his base at Harrow well and truly ; under different conditions he had done the same at Oxford. When I heard shortly after my last interview that he was dead, I knew that it was well. He could never endure to be idle, and therefore it was happier for him that he should not live to be very old.

FED BY THE RAVENS.

I.

FOR such a rising, flourishing, thoroughly go-ahead place as Mallington the municipal buildings were a standing disgrace. They were old, small, mean, and inconvenient. They had not even a real antiquity to recommend them. The town-hall itself had been built in the reign of Farmer George; the other buildings had been added from time to time as the growth of the population made such additions absolutely necessary, and very little regard had been paid to congruity.

For a long time it had been generally recognised that this prominent eyesore must be removed and something put in its place that should be worthy of the town; but as soon as any definite plan was brought forward, a perfect storm of controversy raged. The scale of the new buildings, the cost, the style—all these matters formed the subject of long and often acrimonious debate, so that for many years after the project was first mooted nothing came of it except words and a fierce quarrel between two parties on the town council—the economists, headed by the mayor, Sir William Gross, and the men of taste, whose leader was himself a local architect, John Raven by name. Unfortunately, Mr. Raven was deplorably hot-tempered, and his reputation had become clouded in his later years, while his opponents openly, but unfairly, declared that his zeal for a new town-hall was really prompted by his desire to secure the job. It was not till after the death of both the protagonists that the quarrel was patched up and—a decent interval having passed—a new scheme was elaborated, which was supported with something like unanimity. By this time the growing prosperity of Mallington had removed the fears and scruples of the more rigorous economists, and it was generally felt that a handsome building would be not only an ornament to the town, but a good investment as well. A sum of £40,000 was fixed as the maximum expenditure, and it was further decided to invite at least six architects to send in competing designs. A heavy fee commanded the services of Sir Summers Lyle as assessor and adviser to the corporation, and one of his duties was to select the architects who should be asked to compete.

II.

Paul Vallance was the only son of a country doctor, a shrewd competent man who was hard-headed without being hard-hearted. For more than thirty years he had lived at Shrewsbury, and had built up an excellent practice which he looked upon as his son's natural inheritance. It was a great disappointment when he found that his boy's tastes ran along quite different lines. At school the lad shone neither in classics nor in mathematics. As for natural science, it excited in him not the slightest interest. On the other hand, he was hardly ever without a pencil in his fingers, and he won the drawing prizes with a monotonous regularity. Old buildings and ancient brasses were his favourite hobbies, and it was no easy task to drag him past a fine building. Dr. Vallance remembered that his wife's grandfather had been an R.A., and with a sigh he declared that he would not kick against the pricks. So Paul came up to London, entered the offices of Messrs. Burden & Cramp, and soon made his way into the Academy schools, where he spent most of his evenings. His success showed that no mistake had been made. At the end of his three years' pupillage he was very nearly if not quite the best draughtsman in the office, and at the Academy he won a travelling scholarship.

He came back, a fine handsome young man, with sketch-books and portfolios that bore witness to his industry as well as to his talents, and smoothed his way into a first-class office as an improver. When he had been there nearly three years he received, to his astonishment, an invitation to dine with his principal. Mr. Ashton's ordinary manner was so frigid and reserved that such a sudden advance seemed almost unintelligible. He went, however, and found that in his own bachelor's flat the distinguished architect was another man—genial, humorous, and cordial. Over their cigars he disclosed the reason for the invitation.

'I daresay, Vallance,' he began abruptly, 'you've been astonished at my asking you like this. At business I'm rather an effigy. I don't know exactly how it is, myself—habit, I suppose. As soon as I leave Bloomsbury I begin to thaw. Down there I suppose I should find it difficult to tell you that I've been very pleased with your work ever since you came to me. In fact I've taken quite a fancy to you. Well now, a day or two ago I had a letter from your father. He tells me that he's written on his own, without saying anything to you about it; and if he hadn't

told me, I should have known it was so by your ingenuous face. He puts it very nicely, but the gist of it is—do I think there would be any chance for you to buy yourself into a decent partnership? I've told him that I think there would—at a price—but that I'd have a talk with you myself. Now I'm going to be perfectly frank. There's no one to follow me here, and I could do with a partner myself. But, as you know, I'm a particular man. You're a splendid draughtsman and you're capital at detail, but that isn't all. I'd like to see you tackle a biggish thing for yourself. Curiously enough, there's a chance just come my way, and yours, too, I think, if you like to take it. I don't know whether you've ever been to Mallington. They're putting up some new municipal buildings—not before they want them. It's a forty-thousand job. I've got a sort of connection with the place, because my first billet was with a Mallington man—old John Raven. A rare good man he was too, if only he could have kept his temper, and his hands off the bottle. There's a big church of his at Stenton that's simply wonderful for the time when he did it. And some of his country-houses are pretty well perfect of their kind. He'd big ideas, too, if he'd had a chance and a stiffer backbone. Well, they seem to have remembered me, and they've asked me, through Lyle, to compete. It isn't my sort of thing, and I don't care much about competitions; but if you like, I'll try to pass on the invitation to you—I think Lyle will do it for me. Then you can take your holiday down there at once, and have a good look round—there's a lot in that. Of course you'll have some Tartars against you, but it'll be a rare chance to show your mettle. And I'll say this: if you pull it off, I'll offer you a partnership—of sorts, of course—without a penny out of your father's pocket. There, *that's the offer*—no, you needn't say "Thank you." It's only an intelligent selfishness, and besides, you mayn't pull it off, you know.'

'If I were to, it would only be by picking your brains,' said Paul.

'I don't care whose brains you pick as long as you pull it off,' answered the other; 'the offer stands.'

III.

Mallington was big enough and prosperous enough to boast of a Metropole, and the Metropole was very proud of its chef. But, though the tariff was really, as the advertisement said, 'strictly

moderate,' Paul Vallance realised in twenty-four hours that the big showy hotel was about the last place for a man on his errand. What he wanted was a quiet little lodging where he could think and plan without disturbance or distraction. As it happened, his father had been able to give him a letter of introduction to the vicar of one of the churches. It occurred to the young man that a clergyman would be very likely to know of such a lodging as he required. Accordingly, he presented his letter and asked the question.

Mr. Stoneham opened a drawer and took out a small notebook.

'It's a question I'm often asked,' he said—'so often, that I keep a little list. Yes; here we are. Mrs. Arnold, Mrs. Clowson—they are both biggish houses—Mrs. Douglas—that's a boarding-house.'

'I'd rather go to a small house if it is reasonably comfortable. I would prefer to be the only lodger.'

'Why then, here's just the thing—stupid of me not to have thought of it at once. Mrs. Baxter. She's a widow in reduced circumstances; quite a lady, but her husband died soon after she was married, and left her with a child to bring up and not too well provided for. It's a nice little house, and I'm sure you'd be comfortable.'

So Paul wrote down the address, and went at once to investigate.

'I hope the baby isn't a screamer,' he said to himself.

He was very pleased with the appearance and position of The Gables. It was a pretty little red-brick house with a tiled roof, standing in a beautifully kept garden, and, though some distance away, commanding an excellent view of the doomed municipal buildings. Mrs. Baxter was a pale, thin woman, with an air and appearance of refinement that was borne out by her manner of speaking. The rooms were pleasant and everything was beautifully clean; even the small servant who opened the door was a pattern of neatness. In five minutes the bargain was struck.

'I'm rather a light sleeper,' he said, as she showed him out: 'does the baby cry much?'

'The baby! What baby?' she asked, evidently in great astonishment.

'I—I understood you had one,' he stammered.

'I have only one child,' she answered, 'and she is just twenty.'

IV.

Paul was naturally energetic, and as soon as he was settled at The Gables he fell to with amazing industry and zest. Besides the data with which he, in common with the other competitors, had been supplied, he took measurements, examined the arrangements of the old buildings, considered in detail the surroundings, and then began to plan for himself, and to make rough sketches. The French windows of his sitting-room opened into the garden, and when Mrs. Baxter suggested that he would find it pleasanter to work out of doors in the shade, he tried the experiment, and found it such a success that he often repeated it.

It was his landlady's custom to present herself, each morning, immediately after breakfast, for a discussion as to the day's meals. On the third morning—it was a Saturday—after the discussion was finished, she said,

'I am going away till Monday, but my daughter will see to everything for you.'

By this time they were on friendly terms, and she added, with a smile, 'my baby, you know.'

He laughed.

'That *was* a ridiculous mistake of mine!' he said.

He repeated the remark to himself the next morning and with added emphasis, when the door opened, after breakfast, and the baby appeared. She was a tall girl, dark like her mother, but with a delicacy of feature and a vivacity of expression that were all her own.

Instinctively Paul stood up, and then was vexed with himself as he remembered that he had always remained seated when her mother visited him.

'Good morning, Mr. Vallance,' the girl said. His sensitive ear noticed with pleasure a singularly musical voice. 'I think you told mother that you would have the cold beef for dinner. Something dreadful has happened. It's gone naughty during the night. I ought to have remembered that it might turn, when it was so thundery last night. Then I could have got something else in. I am so sorry. Do you think you could put up with an omelette and a salad? The sweets will be all right, of course.'

She looked so distressed that Paul felt ashamed—of what, he hardly knew.

'There's nothing I like better than an omelette,' he answered her, 'but I've often made a good dinner on bread and cheese.'

She came in again after tea.

'Could you put up with another omelette—a different kind—for supper?' she asked.

'If it's anything like the first one, I shall be in clover,' he answered.

After supper he sat in semi-darkness by the open window, busy with thoughts of the great design he as yet could only see in parts, not as a perfect whole. Commanding as it was in position, the site was in some respects very awkward. If he used almost the whole of it, as he seemed bound to do, in order to secure the required accommodation, he could not see how to secure the balance and harmony of design without which he would only be repeating the old failure. As he leaned back, absorbed in the problem, the piano in the next room struck up. The windows of that room, too, led into the garden, but now they were closed. He wished they were open, for he was passionately fond of music, though with no great knowledge or executive ability. But he knew in a moment that the player was a real musician, and he guessed that it was Beethoven who was speaking. As he listened, the music seemed in some strange fashion to enter into his thoughts—sound translated into form. All his difficulties vanished. It was as though the slaves of the lamp in myriads were toiling for him and rearing under his eyes vast buildings each more magnificent than its predecessor. Nay, there was no hint of toil. It was rather as if the mighty structures rose, full-grown, from magic seed. Then suddenly the music stopped, and all the aery palaces vanished into darkness.

The next day, at the earliest opportunity, Paul asked Mrs. Baxter whether her daughter were musical.

'Why, yes,' she answered, as though the fact were notorious. 'She's been working at it since she left school. She got her L.R.A.M. last year, and she's beginning to get a connection as a teacher.'

'I wonder whether she'd play again sometimes in the evening. Last night it seemed to put new life into me when I was worrying over my plans.'

'Of course she will,' answered Mrs. Baxter. 'To-night, if you like.'

And Paul intimated that he would like it—very much indeed.

V.

Three days afterwards—on Thursday evening about nine o'clock, to be precise—Paul Vallance and Cecily Baxter were engaged to be married.

It was hasty, no doubt, and terribly rash; Paul himself was ready to admit it. But then the young man was undoubtedly impulsive, and Love is a sad tyrant. As for the young lady, she, too, must have been impulsive; indeed, as far as prudence and commonsense are concerned, there was nothing to choose between them. Mrs. Baxter was outwardly perturbed, almost to tears, but in her heart she was conscious of a rebellious joy. She had liked the young man from the very first. He was a gentleman, and she felt sure he was clever. Her painful experience of genteel poverty had made her eager that her daughter should be free from fear of quarter-day and the dread of the tradesman's bill. Her own father had been an architect, and it seemed to her distinctly providential that a young architect should have fallen in love with Cecily. But she felt the call of *noblesse oblige*, and she insisted that the young man should take his father and mother into his confidence at once.

'There must be no concealment of any kind,' she declared, 'and you must tell them that unless they give their consent I shall never give mine.'

To this ultimatum Cecily also subscribed, so that Paul was left with no alternative, if the engagement were to stand. The very next day he went to Shrewsbury and told his news.

He fully expected astonishment, dismay, and opposition, and he found all the three. But he was, and knew himself to be, a great favourite, and he stuck manfully to his guns.

'Is she a lady, my dear boy?' asked Mrs. Vallance. 'Her mother lets lodgings. You can't wonder at our feeling anxious.'

'No,' he answered, 'I don't. But you needn't worry about that. Cecily's father was a solicitor, and her grandfather was an architect. The father died when Cecily was quite a child and naturally he hadn't had time to make a fortune. Mr. Stoneham told me that; father can write and ask him.'

Then the conversation turned to ways and means.

'You'd be handicapping yourself terribly,' said his father. 'You know what you're making now, and I'm afraid you'll find it very uphill work for a long time.'

'Not if I pull off this Mallington job,' said Paul boldly; 'you know what Ashton has said.'

'Yes, but the "if" is a big one,' answered his father. 'I don't know much about architecture, but I'm sure a competition like that takes a lot of winning.'

Paul took up a photograph he had laid on the table.

'I've won *this*,' he said stoutly, 'and I don't see why I shouldn't win *that*.'

Dr. Vallance looked over his son's shoulder.

'It's a fine face,' he admitted, 'and it looks a good one. If it's a decent likeness, there's some excuse for you.'

'It doesn't half do her justice!' the lover cried. 'If you were to see her, you'd say there was no need for excuses.'

After this, the end soon came. If Mr. Stoneham's reply were satisfactory, and if Paul won the competition, the new daughter would be welcomed. That was the final understanding.

The young man waited till the vicar's letter swept away the first of the 'ifs,' and then hurried back to Mallington to make an end of the second.

VI.

Paul returned to The Gables in high spirits. The artistic temperament was his, with the quick ebb and flow of exaltation and depression. Fresh from what he looked upon as one great victory, his hopes of another almost amounted to a feeling of certainty. Of itself, the prize was a splendid one, but now that it would bring with it Cecily and a partnership, he simply *must* win it. Within an hour of his return he had his drawing-board out and was hard at work. He had an idea at last for the general design, and he was eager to see it in black and white. He took his meals now with Mrs. Baxter and Cecily, and when he went in to supper he showed them the first rough sketch. He was pleased with it himself, and they were enthusiastic.

'It does bring back old times,' said Mrs. Baxter, 'I can remember so well my poor father—the way he used to pull out an envelope or a scrap of paper and make little sketches on them as he sat at dinner—I've seen him do it on the edge of the newspaper. Lovely little things they were, some of them.'

'Mr. Paul ought to see some of grandfather's buildings,' said Cecily. There had been a controversy over the name. The

young man had declared that he would only answer to 'Paul'; Mrs. Baxter had suggested that for the present 'Mr. Vallance' was the proper form. Finally they had compromised on 'Mr. Paul.'

'Yes, I should like to, very much,' he said, but without any great zest.

'There's the church at Stenton,' remarked Mrs. Baxter—'that's been very much admired.'

'Stenton!' exclaimed Paul, waking up at once to keen interest. 'Why, Mr. Ashton was telling me about that. You don't mean to say your father was John Raven?'

'Yes, of course he was,' she answered; 'I thought I told you.'

'You said he was an architect, but I'd no idea it was he. Mr. Ashton was one of his pupils. Where is Stenton?'

'It's the next station, or you can walk out to it along the London Road,' answered Cecily.

'You must take me there—to-morrow,' said Paul. 'I daren't go back to the office without having seen it.'

After Mr. Ashton's praise, Paul expected a fine building, but the church far surpassed his expectation. It was noble in conception and beautiful in detail; just a little too florid in ornament, he thought, but that was really the only criticism to suggest itself.

'Your grandfather was a big man,' he said to Cecily, and when they reached home he delighted her mother by his enthusiastic praise.

'There are some of his drawings put away upstairs,' she said; 'I must get them out some day for you to look at.'

'Oh yes, please do,' he answered, but next day Mrs. Baxter announced that she couldn't find them.

'They'll turn up at the spring cleaning,' said Cecily. 'That's when the sea gives up its dead.'

VII.

Young love and hard work do not always run comfortably together in harness, and when Paul Vallance went up to town he took with him the rough sketch, a number of small detail drawings, and nothing else. Curiously enough, the sketch, with which he had been so pleased at first, had already lost most of its charm. This, however, did not trouble him. 'When I'm alone,' he told himself, 'and can concentrate my thoughts on the problem, I shall soon get the hang of the thing.'

To his intense disgust, this was just what he failed to do. The more he looked at the sketch, the less he liked it. It was stiff, formal, slavishly symmetrical; worst of all, it was amateurish. He was not in the least surprised when Mr. Ashton shook his head.

'I can see what you were trying for,' said the great man, 'but you haven't caught it, have you? You must try again, and on a different tack, too.'

He did try, on a great many tacks, but each new departure only left him a little more dissatisfied and discouraged, and all the time the weeks were running out, and the day for sending in the sketch drawings was coming nearer and nearer. It was really rather wonderful that he kept depression at bay as well as he did. Perhaps the credit was partly due to certain letters that arrived at frequent intervals, always with the Mallington postmark. But there came a day when even these could not sustain him, when the worry and the disappointment and the apprehension of failure made him a rather pitiable object.

'Look here, Vallance,' said Mr. Ashton, one Thursday afternoon, 'this won't do at all. You look like a consumptive gargoyle. Go down into the country to-morrow, and suck in fresh air for the week-end. Perhaps it will bring some new ideas with it.'

So, nothing loth, Paul wrote a hasty line to say he would be at Mallington in time for supper on Friday.

Both Cecily and her mother were shocked at his appearance, but, with great discretion, they said as little as possible about it, and were resolutely cheerful at supper.

'By the bye,' said Mrs. Baxter to Paul, as they rose from the meal, 'I came across that old portfolio of my father's drawings the other day. The dust has got inside and spoilt the look of some of them, but you may find something to interest you. They're in your bedroom, but I wouldn't open it to-night. The sooner you're in bed, the better, you know. That's country law.'

'All right,' said Paul, 'but may I have a cigarette in the garden before I go to prison?'

'Just one,' said Cecily, 'and I'll come out to see that it is only one.'

There, in the quiet and darkness of the garden, he told her his trouble.

'It's no good, Cis,' he said, 'I haven't got the ghost of a chance—Ashton told me as much when he saw that beastly sketch. I think the stake's too big—the thought of it unnerves me. My detail's

all right—Ashton himself said some of it was fine, and he's the shyest praiser you ever heard. It's the composition, the grouping, the thing as a whole, that beats me. When I hear you play it seems to come to me, and when you stop it's gone. It's my first big thing,' he added, as if in excuse, 'and I suppose it's a little too big. But what a price to pay for failure!'

And he groaned.

'I don't believe in failure,' she answered. 'Mr. Ashton isn't infallible. I'll play to you to-morrow till the new idea comes, and I won't stop till you've got it safe in black and white. And if the worst comes to the worst—well, we're young enough to wait till you're old enough to win.'

'We'll have one more bid for it,' he said, trying hard to light his courage at her torch; but his voice betrayed him.

VIII.

For once the country law commended itself to him. Within a very few minutes his light was out and his head on the pillow. But sleep he could not. The sight of Cecily had only reminded him of all that depended on this competition in which he was doomed to fail. Then his sketches and designs, the poor awkward, disconnected, unhappy-looking things, upreared themselves before his eyes. What would Street have made of that site, or Ashton, or Waterhouse in his happier moments!

'Oh, confound it all!' he cried, and jumped out of bed and lighted the candle, to consult his watch. It was close upon midnight, so he had been tossing about for nearly an hour and a-half, and now he felt hopelessly and glaringly wide awake. He pounced on a book which lay under his candlestick, but it proved to be an account of the Thermal Waters of Bath, and he dropped it in disgust. Then he caught sight of a big old portfolio propped up against the dressing-table.

'The drawings!' he exclaimed joyfully. 'I hope he's got that church at Stenton there.'

Sitting on the side of the bed, he poised the candle on the pillow, opened the portfolio, and spread out the drawings one by one. The draughtsmanship was nothing out of the way, but many of the slighter drawings were full of interest, and some little rough plans and sketches for a proposed Club at Manchester, which apparently had never been erected, he found most interesting of all. At the bottom lay a brown-paper parcel tied with red

tape and endorsed 'The Mallington Squabble.' First came copies of local newspapers, brown and creased, with long letters blue-pencilled down their margins—letters, most of them, signed by 'Yours &c. John Raven,' vehemently and often angrily urging the expenditure of a 'reasonably' large sum in order to give Mallington municipal buildings worthy of what in twenty years' time it must inevitably be. Then followed some MS. letters, often illegible, from 'Your obedient servant, Thomas Gross,' with copies of answering and intemperate letters from Raven himself. And, last of all, in a big envelope were three Indian-ink drawings. Paul took them out and uttered a little cry of astonishment and admiration. One was a plan, the others were front and rear elevations of a building on the well-known site.

'Good Lord, what a man!' he exclaimed, as he held them up behind the candle. 'Ashton himself couldn't beat that. What fools the others must have been. Look how he's used that ugly corner. And that tower—the very thing I wanted, and couldn't place. And yet'—he peered at the drawings eagerly—'I know I'm a presumptuous ass—but I do believe my porch with the colonnades is an improvement there—Drat!'

For at that moment the candle, or what was left of it, gave an uneasy lurch and collapsed into darkness.

After a long and dreamless sleep, Paul woke up to hear Cecily's voice at the door.

'Do you know what the time is? It's just struck ten. Your hot water's as cold as the sea.'

'Ten!' he shouted, his voice like a schoolboy's. 'That's what comes of country law. I'll be down in no time.'

'It was those drawings,' he explained, as the ladies watched his solitary meal. 'They're simply magnificent. They've given me the best lesson I've ever had. May I use it for my design?'

'Of course you may,' said Mrs. Baxter; 'the more you use, the better he'd be pleased.'

Paul, fresh from the amenities of Mr. Raven's correspondence, had his own doubts on the subject, but he only expressed his gratitude.

All that day he worked furiously, and when his sketch elevation was finished, he took out again the Raven drawings and compared them with his own.

'He showed me the way,' he said to himself as he

looked at them, 'but I do believe I've gone a little farther up the road.'

To Cecily he was equally outspoken, as he said good-bye on Monday morning.

'When the parson says "Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?" I shall hear Grandfather Raven shouting out "Hang it all, I've had to!"'

The same afternoon he showed his sketch to Mr. Ashton.

'Ah,' exclaimed that usually undemonstrative gentleman, 'you've done it this time, my boy! That's the best design I've seen for many a day. I knew you wanted a day or two off. I don't know what you've been doing to yourself. You were as white as a sheet and as lean as a whipping-post. Now you look quite plump and rosy.'

Paul took out the portfolio drawings and pointed to the name in the corner.

'The Ravens have been feeding me,' he said.

IX.

Three months later, the *Mallington Guardian* contained the following paragraph under big headlines.

'THE MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS.

COMMITTEE'S DECISION.

ROMANTIC INCIDENT.

'The building committee of the town council, after considering the report of Sir Summers Lyle, have unanimously selected the designs sent in by Mr. Paul Vallance, F.R.I.B.A. Mr. Vallance, who is quite young, has had a distinguished career as a student, and is at present in the offices of the eminent architect, Mr. T. A. Ashton. A touch of romance is imported into the situation by the fact that Mr. Vallance has just become engaged to be married to Miss Cecily Baxter, the daughter of Mrs. Baxter of The Gables, Chilton Road. Miss Baxter's grandfather, Mr. John Raven, will be remembered by some of our older readers as himself a distinguished architect and a very prominent advocate of worthy municipal buildings for the borough. We heartily congratulate Mr. Vallance on his double success.'

B. PAUL NEUMAN.

IN PRAISE OF SKI-ING.

SKI-ING is the perfect motion. I shall not qualify this dogmatic statement till I find a good ski-runner who prefers some other form of speed. I have met runners who have tried everything from an aeroplane to a racing car, from a steeplechase to a Cresta toboggan run. One and all placed ski-ing above all rivals. Aeroplanes used to raise uneasy doubts till I met a distinguished airman who told me that he found ski-ing more exciting. After the first novelty wears off—so he said—flying becomes monotonous. One patch of air is very much like another. Wind pockets are exceptional, whereas the snowy hillside is full of traps for the unwary.

The lust for pace is a passion for which there is no patent explanation. But though we cannot explain the joy of swiftly changing our position in space, we can roughly estimate the factors which make for pleasurable motion. Mere speed is not enough. A man asleep in a train is travelling some sixty miles an hour along the rails, and some six hundred miles a second through space. Neither motion is a conscious joy. It is the sense of personal control that alone gives satisfaction—a sense that is most complete in ski-ing. To get the fine unspoiled savour of pace you must eliminate mechanism. The motorist asks for a costly and complicated machine and roads in good repair. The Cresta enthusiast craves a skeleton toboggan built with a nice adjustment of weight and an ice run that costs large sums to maintain. But the ski-runner is content with the knowledge that wood will slide on snow. The pioneers hewed a plank, tapered its end, and attached it to their feet with a rough leather thong. They needed neither roads nor specially prepared runs. Their charter claimed service from the hills untampered. The hills were white unto the harvest, and they could reap wherever they chose to furrow with their ski.

The sense of control is more perfect than in other motions. The ski-runner can attain speed of some sixty miles an hour and can stop within a short distance. Leifberg, after making a big jump, has swung to a standstill before reaching the level. The motorist pulls up within a few yards if he has good brakes, but the brakes

do not like it, the engine does not like it, the whole machine pulses out its discontent. Nobody could stop half-way down the Cresta.

But watch an expert ski-runner. Forty miles an hour and not a yard less he is travelling. Watch him as he 'telemarks' to a standstill. If he tried to force the swing by a jerk he would fall. He just sinks on his knee, weights and edges the leading ski, vanishes behind a wave of snow, and as the cloud falls gently back you see him—erect and facing the slope. There has been no wrench, no perceptible shock, and nothing to explain the miraculous destruction of speed, nothing save a bank of snow, like an Atlantic wave severed by the bows of the *Mauretania*. And yet, unless dynamics are at fault, force cannot disappear like smoke. It must have gone somewhere. There was power enough to break a leg, but the momentum has been distributed evenly along the length and breadth of the ski, and the ski have been steadily forced against the soft resistance of the snow. There is nothing jarring in such sudden arrest. A swift 'telemark' is a wholly delightful sensation. Never does momentum disappear so easily.

Mercury had wings on his ankles. The modern Mercury has ski on his feet. And ski are a pretty good substitute for wings. A man and a motor are two entities, but the ski seem to belong to one's very being. The motorist lounges back in a padded seat. The Cresta rider lies prone, which is not consonant with due dignity, since, so says Sir Thomas Browne, even the serpent (before the fall) went erect like a man. The ski-runner sweeps down the hillside erect, with a natural and graceful poise. He creates pace without the aid of machinery. Ski-ing is autochthonous; it is born of the Mother Earth. Between you and the hillside there is an inch of sensitive ash that pulses with every beat of the slope. The ski form an intimate link between you and the ever-changing surface. As they rise and fall, leaping over hillocks, sinking into dips, they seem at once living, vital things, with a will and a joy that is all their own. And this is the peculiar glory of our craft. It forces us to a knowledge of Nature in one of her most fascinating moods. The ski-runner must adapt his tactics to every change in the hillside, to every fickle fancy of the snow. The skater and the skeleton rider soon learn to know the tricks of the rink or ice run. But the hills are never the same, the snow is never the same, every slope is a revelation, every snowfall a new discovery. One moment the deep powder calls out for the swoop of the 'telemark,' the next for the close-cut swiftness of the Christiania, as with feet close

together you force the whole breadth of the ski against the hard surface of a sunburnt slope. You may take a slope straight and risk a toss, or descend by the crafty stemming turn, dodging between obstacles and working downwards with sharp neatly executed curves. No sport makes such instant demands on the swift alliance of muscle, nerve, and mind. A mistake ensures that you pitch heavily on your face when the snow sticks, or on your back when it suddenly quickens. The summer climber has to learn the habits of the snow, but his decision is deliberate. He has time to think and probe. Not so the ski-runner. The wind whistles past, and only a mottled look on the snow down in the dip, or a ridgy appearance of the slopes far below, will betray their treacherous secrets. For him the snow is no inert covering of the hills, the shroud that hides dead pasture. It is very much alive with a multiple personality. It is full of joy, and full of malice. He will argue with it; he will curse it; as he rises from a sudden grave he will spue it from his mouth and expel it from his clothes with an oath. He will invoke its aid, and pour blessings on it when all goes well.

Let me try and describe a good day's run. For three days it has snowed, but just before sunset on the third day the clouds show signs of relenting. A queen of the hills unveils. The curtain of mist sweeps back, drawn by a giant hand, revealing the mountains that have put on a new garment matchless in its white purity. That night the glass falls thirty degrees below freezing, and you dream of that perfect snow which has fallen like a gift from Paradise to reward you for your patient struggles with a surface off which sun and wind have worn the nap.

The first day after a heavy fall is not safe for a long climb, so you amuse yourself on the lower levels, and wait for the new surfaces to settle. Another night of frost and you start soon after the tardy winter dawn. You climb for an hour up some footpath leading from the higher châteaux, and then you buckle on your ski and follow your leader as he sets a deliberate track. He leads upwards through the forests where the snow still hangs on the reluctant pines and builds itself a nest on the burdened branches. Gradually the firs open out on to long spacious slopes that curve upwards in a sweep of tender whiteness to the pass. Here others have been before you, and the snows tell the tale of their labours. In summer a man may be dragged up the peaks and the patient rocks will give no hint of his ungainly pilgrimage. But in winter the writing on the

mountain wall betrays the poor performer. For the most part it is anonymous bungling, but you recognise with a laugh the broad double track of friend Jones. Who but Jones could have fallen on that easy slope whose white surface is broken into by unseemly graves? And just observe that horrid curve which he calls a stemming turn; his patient stick has signed its own warrant on the snow. But there is the work of a master. The narrow spoor has cut the hillside as sharp as a knife, and the long linked curves betray the tracks of an expert. Good and bad, they have left their work for all to see. But Nature is merciful, and sooner or later she will restore the slopes to their unsullied purity, burying even the bungling of Jones behind her kindly curtain.

There is a touch of personal romance in ski-tracks. I remember long ago crossing a great glacier pass. As we worked our way upwards the spoor of two unknown ski-runners kept us company. They had descended the pass some days before and their long unbroken tracks proclaimed their skill. Their moments of triumph and disaster were recorded on the sensitive surface. I shall never meet them, and if I did we should pass as strangers, yet somehow when we lost their track we seemed to have parted from friends.

Even the patient uphill zigzags have a certain beauty as they creep stealthily upward from the forest to the skyline. On ski you can never climb at a steep angle, but somehow or other your goal draws nearer, and after a lunch in the sun and the best of pipes, you at last reach the cairn.

You scrape the snow from your ski, and adjust the binding. Through the day you have been taking mental notes of the best line; you seize a last chance of deciding the course. It is afternoon and the sun has lost its power. The frost has captured the slopes and transformed them into beds of soft crystals which rustle against your ski like autumn leaves. Your leader starts downwards. He begins cautiously with some downhill 'telemarks,' then gradually speeds up and swings downward in 'winding bouts of linked music long drawn out.' Now he is taking everything straight. He is hidden in a trailing cloud. In an inconceivably short time he reappears far below, a black spot against the whiteness. He is a fine performer, and he has covered five hundred vertical feet in two minutes. This section took you forty minutes to climb. A laugh and a shout float upwards, and you realise that your turn has come. You give a last glance at your ski and pause on the brink to choose your line. This moment is half suspense

and half a quickening joy. But your ski are impatient. They strain at the leash, and before you know it they are off. And you hear a sound whose echo haunts the long summer months, the sibilant hiss of the snow as your ski plough through the crystals. A few curves and then you set your teeth for a straight run. The wind roars by. A tempest deafens you. A hurricane sucks the breath out of your body. A wave of crystals is driven breast-high. The forest rushes up to meet you. A lonely fir swings upward like a telegraph-pole seen from an express train. A wild song sings in your heart, your whole being is on fire with speed. The slope changes suddenly. You set your teeth and vow that you will not collapse through sheer terror. You lean back a little as you reach the hollow, and then throw yourself forward, sinking low down, as your ski are uplifted on a sudden rise. The pace carries you uphill and over down on to a gentler gradient. You realise (to your intense astonishment) that you have not fallen. And as you sweep sedately down the milder slopes the concentrated emotions of the last few seconds find expression in a wild whoop of joy. At such moments even the most prosaic become vocal. The hurricane dies away, and a gentle breeze sings in your ears as you sail downward. You are playing with gravity, you are the master of the snow. You can make it yield like water or resist like iron. Suddenly you exert your power—a swish, and you are at rest. The crystals sprayed upwards and ‘the slabberie snow broth relented and melted about your heeles.’ Strange that an Elizabethan should have struck out this phrase.¹ If only they had ski-d, what epics we might have enjoyed!

And as you turn to study with quiet satisfaction the furrow cut by your ski, the others swoop past. The sun dips behind the hill, and its light catches the snow-crystal spray thrown up in flames of fire. Very literally do they trail clouds of glory, and even friend Jones in his shirt of flame seems an angel of light.

This moment before the actual sunset is more beautiful than the dramatic glow. The light is thrown slantwise across the snow, and the sparkling surface glows with a thousand diamond points. A group of trees near the skyline is suddenly transformed into molten silver. You pass onwards through a glade of pines, and as the night creeps up from the valley you make your last swing in the river

¹ Philemon Holland in his translation of Livy on Hannibal's passage of the Alps.

basin. You feel very sorrowful—more so than in England, for you realise that, after all, you have a kinship with the creeping things, and that though for a spell you have borrowed the wings of a dove, yet this brief hour is only a glimpse into Paradise, a *ἡδονὴ μονόχρονος* of perfect bliss. The burden of your mortality weighs heavy on you, and you reflect sadly that as yet no prophet has held out the remotest hope of snow in the world to come.

Of jumping I can only speak as an onlooker, but I shall not readily forget the thrill with which I first saw a Norwegian launched into space. The whole setting was perfect. The dark firs showed up bravely against the turquoise sky and the splendour of white sunlit hills. The jump was built on an open glade between the thickly wooded pines. It was draped in flags. Above it the gradient was about twenty degrees, below nearer thirty. A great crowd had assembled, and gave the whole performance the stimulus of collective emotion. You felt that a thousand men and women were holding their breath at the same moment, that a thousand limbs relaxed as the runner sped safely down to the level.

We could just see him standing at the top of the hill. He scraped his ski, and then, suddenly grasping a pole in each hand, give a vigorous punt downhill. Throwing the poles aside, he swept down on to the platform.¹ A few yards before reaching the edge he stooped down till his fingers rested lightly on his ankles. Then, as he shot forward over the platform, he straightened out like a dart, and with a sharp vigorous movement swung his arms out in front of him. He swept like an arrow into space, and fell in one long advancing curve through fifty feet of vertical height. There was a sharp report as his ski struck the slope. Instantaneously he sunk forward on to his knee, thus broadening the basis of support and weakening the shock. Then he recovered himself, and, once more erect, shot like a streak of lightning—down the hill—out on to the open—a wave of snow—and he stood smiling as we shouted our acclamations.

It was more than an amazing physical feat. A trained acrobat is more impressive and his performance is certainly more dangerous,

¹ The jump is, of course, a downward jump. The impetus of the run shoots the jumper from the edge of the platform. The length of the jump is measured from the edge of the take-off to the alighting point. The hill below is usually thirty degrees, so the vertical height fallen is about half the length of the jump. 150 feet has been jumped, and in this case the ski-runner fell nearly 80 feet.

but he only awakens curiosity and alarm, whereas this brave flight has a touch of winged beauty; it moves one like music.

But ski-ing is something more than the divinest motion known to man. As the days close in, there are other memories that grip the heart beside those of the ski gathering themselves for a sudden dive down hillsides, asleep beneath their shroud of tender snow. These thoughts stir us with passionate longing, but they pass and more tranquil visions possess us. For this is the chief glory of ski-ing: it brings us into touch with all that is fairest and most enduring on the earth; its arena is knightlier and more wonderful than that of any other sport. And we look for a reward beyond the short-lived, though exultant, pleasure of the actual run—a reward which is treasured, though only a memory, a memory of days when life changed its colour, and the world of commonplace endeavour slipped from us like a dream, moments when we heard half-caught echoes of 'the deep music of the rolling world.' These endure and surprise us by their rebirth in commonplace surroundings, and startle us by remembered beauty. We recall, perhaps, the great vision from the skyline which crowned a long glacier pass, the hidden and secret valley where the swift invasion of the ski seemed to wake echoes that had slumbered since time began, the silent causeway of a glacier softened by the radiant glory of a January moon, or some moment when the hills opened out and the earth fell away from our feet, and we looked down through the mystery of a great depth to the winding reaches of some half-frozen fjord, locked in by cliff and forest, and stealing its way westward to the sunset and the sea.

Civilised man often recovers, as a pastime, pursuits which were essential to the life of our forefathers. Hunting is an illustration, and ski-ing itself developed, not as a sport, but as the key to country impassable on foot. The skyline lured our fathers by its promise of game. They crossed it in search of food. The immediate need has vanished, but the pass still stirs our heart with its restless message. The true ski-runner seeks something more than mere ski-ing. He may find a perfect valley where the hillsides seem designed for his craft, and yet he will pass onward in obedience to this insistent call. It is pleasant enough to explore the best runs of a popular centre, and wind up each way with a game of bridge. Good cooking and hot baths have their place in the scheme of things. But there will be times when these things seem unprofitable. If you are a wanderer at heart you will think regretfully of the

moments when you swung down through the gathering shadows on to some hamlet, nursed in the enfolding snows. You will see the scattered lights brightening through the gloom, and recall some low-roofed inn where the villagers barter the unchanging commerce of local gossip that keeps them alive through the dreary winter sleep. You will remember, perhaps, the room in which you supped while the children busied themselves with their school task and the women quietly worked at the spinning-wheel. In summer you would have slept in that big hotel whose shuttered windows are the only link with the feverish activity of the tourist season. Such glimpses of the underlying life of the people, changed only in a few superficial details, are the peculiar privilege of the ski-runner. You do not regret the hotel lounge, for you feel that these wayside evenings are in the same key as the days dedicated to freedom and light.

Next morning your host bids you a cheery godspeed and you pass upwards to a new skyline with its eternal promise. Somehow the divide between the valley of quiet memory and the valley of quickening hope is a watershed of conflicting desire. Half reluctantly you part from the long defile whose secrets you have cherished through many an hour of unfolding beauty. Far away in the west you greet the pass crossed three days ago, a small notch against the unplumbed sky. Sixty miles away—an express train could devour the distance in an hour. But you have learned a better measure than the scale of furlong, as the academic statements of the map translated themselves into terms of experience. By the sweat of your brow you have worked from pass to pass. There is an intellectual satisfaction in mentally linking up valleys and ridges into one consistent system. The watersheds fall into place, and you feel the Alps not as one unbroken chain, but as a sequence of connecting and parallel ranges. The sense of travel is emphasised when two passes carry you through three languages. Often you feel that you are moving through time as well as space, as you leave in the morning some shrine of mediæval faith, unwashed by the high tides of the ages, and glide down in the evening on to some broad and peopled valley where the Reformation has left stranded on the shore a trim little Zwinglian church.

The wanderer gets the best out of ski-ing even though he never crosses the summer snowline, and yet, if the great mountains have ever claimed him, their call will never seem so certain as in the seasons when their secrets are most jealously guarded. The

mountaineer cares little that the actual ski-ing is often far from pleasant on those higher snows, exposed to wind and sun. In August the fashionable peaks have only a few hours of respite. They discard the tardy climber after sunset, and their repose is broken before dawn by the first batch of importunate invaders. The terms of capitulation are scored by numberless tracks into the heart of the long-suffering snows. It is otherwise in winter. The majority of valleys, overcrowded in summer, have no possible attraction for the winter tourist. The glens that wind into the heart of the wintry hills will be busy only with that simple toil, the child of necessity, the labour that is as old as the hills that fashion it. The club huts on the banks of the glaciers are no longer the focus of untiring activity. In summer each new arrival is an unwelcome intruder on their small resources, but in winter you welcome like a brother some stray ski-runner, for an uneasy sense of sacrilege sometimes disturbs the invader of these inviolate snows. The spirit of the place resents you, and you derive moral support from the friendly companionship of your kind. The hills have recaptured their immortal maidenhood. The storms have swept as of old across that mountain land, and have buried all trace of their feverish commerce with man. With the winter snow comes the healing gift of forgetfulness.

The winter Alps fulfil themselves in many ways. You are most conscious of their glory when the intolerable beauty of the moon throws into subtle relief every swell, every ripple, graven by wind and sun on the snows that are the ancestors of kingly glaciers. You respond as easily to their music in some quiet hour on the brow of a sovereign peak. Down in the shaded valleys winter still reigns, but up there, in the colour and light, you could fancy yourself dreaming away an idle hour on the shores of the April Aegean. A whole world of mountains and lesser foothills pass upwards, with a suggestion of rhythmical motion, to the rim of the far horizon, a thousand miles in circumference. In the north, Germany shows her dark forests; in the south, a hint of the Apennines whispers of warm lagoons and eternal summer. The magic of the atmosphere binds the distant hills in webs of intangible sapphire, tenderest of all conceivable tints. The more glaring contrasts of summer may be lacking, but there is a more refined fascination in the thousand tones of colour that separate the warmth of the lake, showing between caressing hills, and the delicate shimmer of snows one hundred miles away.

And who can forget the seven miles of glacier that he descended in one unbroken motion? The slope was so even and unchanging that he seemed to be standing still while the valley glided upwards and the bounding cliffs moved by to a stately measure. Then slowly the earth lost its swiftness. There was a slight pressure on the soles of his feet, as the glacier stopped moving and the snows came to rest. But these things must be felt.

And who knows the pain and penalties of our craft better than ourselves? We have stepped from the warmth of a club hut into forty degrees of frost. We have, perhaps, been chased down the slopes while the night swallowed up the valleys, and the fear of a forced bivouac gripped our hearts. We may have known the frenzied rage of a winter storm beside which the summer hurricane is gentle and forbearing. And yet, even in the moments when we have vowed never again to leave the lower hills, we have known that such oaths are made only to be broken. For the sterner element has its part, and binds us more closely to the hills. I do not wish to discount the more obvious pleasures of the Alpine holiday, and yet, somehow, I can never look from the windows of a great hotel, out on to the snows of old adventure, without a quickening of the pulse and an overmastering desire for the secret and silent valleys where gymkhanas cease from troubling and the turkey trots no more. Just as surely as autumn calls the swallow to the south, so the shortening of the days carries a warrant from the white Paradise whose magic casements reveal some vision of ultimate beauty.

ARNOLD LUNN.

SWEET AUBURN AND SUBURBIA.

BY SIR JAMES YOXALL, M.P.

YESTERDAY my friend Lanyon's car ran us a tour, out from Vallombrosa Gardens N.W. and home again; at a guess, we threaded thirty villages where aged cottages knelt under their thatch, decaying; for a certainty, we skirted four considerable towns where scaffold-poles bristled above rows of half-built brick boxes—new, mean little suburbs for the ante-penultimate poor.

Sweet Auburn bleeds, and the human blood of it trickles away to suffuse these new little suburbs, or to putrefy in the sinks and drains called slums. And not Sweet Auburn's only; St. Denis d'Orgues and Klein-Mudbach are bleeding too. Vallombrosa Gardens and all such middle-class suburbs are an English phenomenon mainly, for nowhere abroad does one see such rings and parallelograms of well-to-do villadom; but the cottage selvages develop everywhere, subjacent to every considerable European town.

Or so Lanyon was saying, in the coffee-room of the *Swan* at N—, when an elderly, bullish-looking man, who had been cutting himself cold beef, cut into our conversation. 'It's all this fuss about education does it!' he growled, Agricola with his mouth full. 'I always said it would!' After that he sat silent, bovinely munching, chewing the cud of prophecy, so to speak; with such an expression of face as your candid friend has when by great good luck he sees a warning of his come true.

So that is why Sweet Auburn bleeds? But is it, I wonder? At ten o'clock this morning the gravel path under the kitchen window here was black with sparrows, or at any rate black and tan. Because there were crumbs about, and excitement, and rough fun. The house-sparrow is the most cit-like of birds, the *gamin* of the street, the most quick, decisive, and neatly rapacious; yet I suppose his ancestors used to sit on hedges, and twitter like Corydon in green lanes? I knew the Hedgesparrows well when I was a boy—the father's unmistakable architectural style in nest-building, and the mother's pretty choice in colours for eggs. But I never heard that the boys and girls of the family were sent to school.

The drift to the towns is not a human tendency only. Town-mice have a pedigree as old as fables. The black-headed gull never went to school, the herring-gull is not a learned bird like the owl, and yet they come up estuaries, and finding that people posted upon solid, ugly rainbows called bridges throw them food which is a change from that eternal fish-diet, they settle down for life upon the suburban Thames. A pair of quails have built a villa in Richmond Park. A peregrine falcon has perched on Nelson's Column. Herons flap through the sky over Kew. Redshank and curlew have been heard in St. James' Park. 'Do you suppose the animals at the Zoo are unhappy there?' I said to Lanyon. 'Not they! They have come to town!'

'It's all this fuss about education does it!' The bullocky person devouring cold boiled flesh of his family had uttered the usual facile commonplace. And the facile is almost always the superficial—I don't believe that any commonplace is ever more than half true, or remains even half true for long, for there is no such thing as 'the simple truth': truth is always complex. The schools are the modern Black Death to peasantry, are they? The schools decant rustic youth into towns, distract them from the glebe, and unroof the cottages? 'I don't believe it,' I said to Lanyon. "*Abstulerat miseris tecta superbus ager*"—where were the village schools in Martial's day?

'The best jobbing-gardener anywhere near Vallombrosa Gardens cannot read, yet he quitted his village at twenty . . . If book-learning causes English joskins to migrate now, why did they migrate to towns when books were rarer than diamonds? If country schools are the root of the mischief, what did the mischief spring from when village schools there were none? Goldsmith could mourn the passing of "a bold peasantry, their country's pride" in 1770, but so did Fanshawe in 1630, nearly three centuries ago, and Queen Elizabeth grew red-hot-headed against churls who *would* desert the fields for Town.'

At this point Lanyon put the brake on. 'All very well, that, for a discussion in St. Swithin's Parish Hall,' he said. 'But the *Agricolae* have to deal with the fact, the reality.' I suppose they have, yet it is no use hankering after the Heptarchy, the wooden ploughshare, and the flail again; it is foolish to suppose that villages can ever exist with churches and public-houses only, and without schools again. The attraction lies in the town, not the impetus in the village; the whistling ploughboy never pipes

so merrily as he does the day when he quits the red ridges for ever, I daresay. I think they make postmen out of ploughboys, for postmen are the whistlers of the streets. A postman brought me a pamphlet this morning, pulled the bell smartly, and went piping away, never dreaming that he had done anything pat and timely to my purpose; but what he brought was the bill of fare for the Eleventh International Congress in Agriculture, and I find that for the eleventh time squires and farmers assembled from all parts of Europe are to sit down to that standing dish 'Désertion des Campagnes.'

For the drift to the towns goes on in every land. It cannot be an effect of education, for it goes on in Andalusia, the Great Smoky Mountains of inland America, the Crimea, and other regions where, at the most, like children in a nursery, they only 'play at school.' The drift to towns is a gravitation, and many magnets pull. Not a woman in Vallombrosa Gardens but has paid the fare of some country lass to her kitchen; girls 'from the country' will stay longer, it is thought, and accept a smaller annual number of pounds. And this is no flight of demi-semi-educated Hodges and Hodgesses only; it is an exodus of people whom the schools have hardly touched. Towns magnetise small pockets and big appetites. There are so many more public-houses to the acre in towns; towns offer such a variety of beer and skittles, cakes and ale. This kind of ginger shall be hot in the mouth of Giles no matter how little you school him. And to town he will go, though you lecture him on bee-keeping till you are stung.

Towns own so much more excitement than villages can afford. In streets the emptiest mind can stare and be content. Towns spread their shops and markets, their electroplated corner taverns and twopenny picture-palaces before the eye; towns are frisky with barrel-pianos and resonant with roarophones; street singers and cornet-players with a taste for pathos touch sentimental hearts in towns. Punch and Judy dwell in towns; buskers haunt the by-streets and juvenile skirt-dancers the alleys of towns. In towns a man who is a big child, with two ideas and three hundred words in his head, may stare all day delightfully. He does not observe; he watches. Without even paying twopence he may perceive the laughable dramas and poignant farces played in by members of the great Society for Promoting the Slaking of Thirst as Often as You Want to, in towns; contemptuously he may note the officious antics of an interfering class of persons

dressed in dark blue ; appreciatively he may listen to the always sharp clarionettes of a German band or the ' drums and tramlings ' of the Salvation Army. Life can be one continuous pageant and malty beanfeast in towns if only you idle and stare. And everywhere you may hear the big laugh of the uneducated, who grin because they do not understand.

But come, let us envy these happy vacuous. We foolish, we who would live in a country house or country cottage if we could, let us covet the sheer joy in towns of emigrants tired of sitting on stiles. We need to plan how to occupy our minds, lest boredom claim us ; or with strange-shaped implements of fruitless toil we go forth upon links, lawns, or pitches, the horny-handed sons of play. Why may *we* not stare into one shop-window for ten minutes—any shop-window will do for a man from Sweet Auburn or Klein-Mudbach, though the red butcher's or the silver-shining fishmonger's for choice. Why cannot we too feel more fascinated than unnerved by the sight of a dray-horse down upon the wet asphalt and bleeding, or humbly sprawling a broken leg ? Why have not we also the tender, romantic hearts that can beatingly watch outside a church in which a wedding is known to be going on ? If only we too could follow a glorious, hiccoughy, singing fellow on his assisted passage to the police-station ! Are there not tumultuous fire-engines to make room for and stare after in towns ? May you not travel in a tram-car into parts utterly unknown to you for twopence, or for a penny add your weight to a motor-omnibus that may squash some foot-passenger into pulp ? Sandwichmen, too, those heralds of the show or the bargain, carry their interesting wooden tabards along the kindred gutter in towns. And is it schools, think you, or uncult human nature making use of cheap railway fares, which dispatches Sweet Auburn and St. Denis d'Orgues towards these multiple delights ?

The other morning I watched a trainful of emigrants quit the sounding hall of locomotive engines which is dedicated to St. Pancras ; they seemed a merry and hopeful folk. Theirs was the roving, adventurous turn which makes English people a race of white-skinned gypsies, dispatching Leicestershire lads to sea and Sussex boys to Alberta. Schools do not instil that voyaging courage, nor can they check it, even if they should. ' And they should not,' I said to Lanyon. ' It is the drift from the narrow arable and pasture closes of Sweet Auburn which has made the British

Empire so open and wide; and emigration from Britain to the towns of the Dominion, the Commonwealth, and the Union must continue if the Empire and the loyalty of successive generations oversea are to last. Which are the Canadians, Australians, and so forth best affected to Britain, think you? Those whose parents were British, I believe. It would be useless to conceal maps from our village children, for instinctively and of race they know how to use the globe. They are fated migrants, some of them—born with the wish to rise and shine, make money or know fame. Lads who could never get a written sum right at Sweet Auburn school will away to cities money-making, if the Lombard strain be in their blood.

‘And show me the school, or the contrary of school, that shall keep incipient genius, talent, or other degree of specific energy on the farms! Near a ford and a bridge, beside a slow, clean stream that I wot of, almost every mile, an old town still sleeps that was a snoring village three hundred and thirty three years ago. London was all but a week’s journey away from it then, but two youths of one generation are known to have made the great adventure thither, with others from the same little place, no doubt, of whom the world has never heard. One of the two was Richard, son of “Henry ffilde of Stratford uppon Aven”; he set out for Town in the year 1579, there to learn the still novel art and mystery of printing, for such was his indefeasible bent. Seven years later a younger ambitious must off to London also, there to besiege the doors of playhouses with a poem in his poke, the first heir of his invention, which for old sake’s sake, very like, Richard Field was willing to print. What farmer or squire, what school or lack of school, could have kept Shakespeare “on the land,” or should?’

I saw the stream of townward rustics blacken the highroads of the world as I spoke; but presently as we came near Chesham in the gloaming I had another vision. For high upon a red ploughed curve I saw an elderly Hodge stand lonely, outlined against the last primrose streak of light: he was so motionless and so roughly clad that I took him for a scarecrow at first. But no, he was human, and in him I saw the last of his Mohican tribe. He stood gazing upon acres his fathers had tilled, and he; upon the village where his forbears had dwelt, and he; and perhaps he was wondering, who is ‘to plough and to sow, to reap and mow,’ when he, like them, shall have gone?

THE BLACK MANGO TREE.

'Two pearls have been dissolved, twenty-seven gold mohurs have been lost, and of the silver and copper the total cannot be cast up.'—*A Despatch from the Battle of Panipat.*

THOSE who are brought into contact with the inner aspirations of the idealist section of the anti-British movement in India know well how Sivajee, the Maratha prince, is held up as hero and saint and model to the militant Hindu. In the days of the Mughal Emperor Alungir, whom men usually speak of by his personal name of Aurungzebe, what time the restored Stuart dynasty sat again on the throne of England, the distant provinces and feudatories of the Empire were in constant revolution. The emperor had abandoned the catholic tolerance of his forefathers, and everywhere the Crescent was taking its toll of Hinduism, so that the twice-born had been driven to fury and bitter despair. The Marathas, those mountain people of the Western Ghauts, had long been a thorn in the Mughal side. They were a mixed people with a large Brahmin colony among them, and a numerous military class who, while claiming Rajput origin, had no doubt considerable aboriginal ancestry. As a power they consisted of a more or less varying federation of States and chiefs, whose object was to live on their neighbours. It was not till Sivajee, the son of a Maratha captain, born in 1627, forced himself to the head of the federation, that anything analogous to a national and patriotic sentiment arose among them. The persecutions of Aurungzebe had prepared the Hindu races for a war of religious freedom. Under Sivajee a vast Hindu State was formed which gradually gained control of Western India. Sivajee, then, and ever since, has figured as the champion of religious freedom and power temporal to the Hindu races. It was for Sivajee, the 'mountain rat,' to throw off Muhammadan dominion in Western India and produce an era when the Hindu might worship his gods and daub his trees and corner stones, free of persecution. The Marathas in earlier times had fought with Islam for prize and for love of strife, but under Sivajee they fought as men fight for a cause. So it is little wonder that the 'mountain rat,' as the Mussalman contemptuously called him and his followers, is now the patron saint of Pan-Hinduism.

How Sivajee and his successors fought the Mughals and destroyed their empire, and how they formed a great military power, that watered its horses in the Ganges and the Indus, is a long story. Suffice it to say that by the middle of the eighteenth century the Maratha confederacy had passed into the real control of the Peshwa, the hereditary minister to the descendants of royal Sivajee.

The downfall of this great military confederacy, which held all India to ransom, did not, as some would believe, have its origin when the East India Company became a military power. Formidable an opponent as the English found it, its might was shaken once and for all by Ahmed Shah the Duranni in the year 1761, at the world-famous battle of Panipat hard by the Black Mango Tree. With the apotheosis of Sivajee at the present day, and of Dundoo Punt the Nana, the adopted son of the last of the Peshwas, it is as well to remember where first the Marathas received the blow that probably changed much of modern Indian history. To follow this we must trace the decline of Mughal Empire from the death of Alungir to the last flicker that once and for all died away before the thin red line on the ridge at Delhi.

It is also well that we, when inclining our liberal ears to the demand of Pan-Hinduism, should remember in its outline the hopeless state of destitution and internecine war from which we rescued India. The break-up of the great Muhammadan Empire, and the wars of the barons that followed thereon, had during the several generations that elapsed before the coming of the English, reduced the country to a state far worse than ever Tilly and Wallenstein had produced in the Palatinate.

In 1707 died Aurungzebe, the Emperor Alungir (the holder of the world), the last of the real Great Mughals, in the fiftieth year of his reign and the ninetieth year of his age. He was succeeded for a few years by his son, who, under the title of Bahadur Shah, ruled as the Mughals used to rule, to die prematurely and leave the empire to ruin. In so vast an empire as that of the Mughals only a firm central authority could keep the great governors and nobles in order. With the death of Bahadur Shah the throne fell into the hands of various king-making factions. Four puppet emperors followed in quick succession, each in his turn falling by a miserable death to the violence of the warring factions. Then a son of Bahadur Shah's was placed on the throne as Muhammad Shah, and succeeded in retaining a nominal authority in the hands of his Wazirs for eight-and-twenty years. In the Asiatic form of chess,

the piece that we know as the queen is called the *Wazir*. The idea of the puppet king, and the powerful hand behind the throne, so well exemplified in the failing years of the Mughal Empire, is typical of the fate of all the empires of the East, and explains to us the anomaly in the form of the game as we know it.

During this reign the power of the Marathas under Bajee Rao the great Peshwa was yearly increasing, and their insolent claim to levy *Chouth*, or one-fourth of the revenue from all lands, was actually sanctioned in certain cases by Imperial firman. It was the purpose of the Marathas to enforce this right over Hindustan proper, over Bengal and over the Dekkan also, by sheer force of arms and insolence, and to live at ease in their own fastnesses on the proceeds.

During the reign of Muhammad Shah on the peacock throne, came in 1738 the overwhelming invasion of Nadir Shah the Persian, with half the clansmen of Central Asia in his train. Moving to Delhi, he met and defeated the Imperial army, whereon the Emperor surrendered, was well received, and accompanied the invader to Delhi, where Nadir announced the money ransom he expected. A report getting about that Nadir had died, the Mughal troops turned on his followers in Delhi, and Nadir, enraged at this, ordered a general massacre. This continued for days, and was followed by an eight weeks' plunder, of which the people of Delhi speak to this day.

The sack over, Nadir Shah reinstated the Emperor Muhammad Shah, annexed the Afghan provinces, with Scinde and Mooltan, and returned to Persia with his booty, which has been put by varying authorities at from six to thirty millions sterling, but was probably less than the lower figure.

With the departure of Nadir Shah began again the struggles of the barons, under a central authority which had lost all power and prestige and wealth. India had several large Afghan colonies of ancient date, continually reinforced by fresh drafts from the hardy races of the North. The struggles were between the 'Lords of Iran,' viz. the Persian Nobles, the 'Lords of Turan,' viz. those of Turkoman or Turanian origin, and the Afghans of Ghilzai, Lodi, and Abdali descent.

Shortly before the death of Muhammad Shah, a fresh danger threatened his authority in the shape of Ahmed Shah the Abdali, who, having possessed himself of Nadir Shah's treasure on the death of that monarch, had founded the Duranni Empire at Kabul and now aspired to be a prince and a ruler in Muhammadan India.

The Abdali, or the *Ben-i-Israel* as they call themselves, claim descent from one Kish or Kais, said to be eighteenth in descent from Saul, King of Israel, and had now assumed the name of Duranni in place of Abdali by order of their leader Ahmed. This was all happening about the time of the last Stuart rising in England and Scotland—that is to say, is almost within reach of a link of two or three lives and their memories. In 1748 Muhammad Shah was gathered to his fathers and succeeded by Ahmed Shah his son, and by this time Ahmed Shah Duranni had made the Mughal governor of Lahore swear allegiance to him and not to the Mughal.

On several previous occasions the Marathas had been called in by one or other of the warring Mughal factions, and Bajee Rao had conceived the idea of becoming Emperor of all India, and supplanting Islam. Soon after the accession of the new Emperor at Delhi they were called in to assist him subdue the rebellious Afghan colony in Rohilcund. In 1754, however, one of the 'Lords of Turan' had deposed the new Emperor and blinded him, creating another prince of the blood Emperor in his stead, with the world-compelling title that Aurungzebe dead fifty years had assumed, viz. Alimgir II. To Delhi then came Dattajee and Mahdajee Sindia with Holkar, Marathas all, to recover the Punjab for the Delhi throne. Here we may see for the moment some guiding policy through the clouds of intrigue and civil war. The Marathas were for the Indian Empire, quite apart from who should control it, and to be rid of the Afghans was their first object. To Ahmed Shah Duranni the maintenance of the faith was the object at heart, with no doubt some advantage for Ahmed Shah as well. His object was to restore the rule of Islam under a Mughal Emperor at Delhi, with the Punjab, however, a province of his own Empire of Kabul. No doubt he would remain the overlord and protector of Islam in India, with the Afghan colonists to watch his interests. Here it may be remarked that the Amir of Kabul of to-day bids fair to stand before the world as the patron of orthodox Islam. The Turk is no more a power, and the Khalefa at *Rum*¹ is no longer a mainspring to the believer. The present occupant of the Duranni throne is the only independent ruler in Islam. During his recent visit to India he took some pains to get his position as a suitable head of the faith to be recognised of the faithful.

However, be that as it may, down from the North came Ahmed Shah Duranni in 1759, to drive the Marathas before him, and

¹ I.e. The Sultan at Constantinople.

restore for the moment the fortunes of Alungir II. Before, however, the Shah and his Afghans could secure the person of the Emperor, the latter had perished miserably at the hands of his Turanian Wazir. A puppet successor was set up but never acknowledged, and as the rightful heir was a refugee in Bengal, the throne of the Mughal stood a-begging. Had the Marathas beaten the Afghans, there is little doubt that Dattajee would have proclaimed the Peshwa Emperor of India. But Dattajee was killed, and the Marathas driven from the Punjab and Delhi with heavy loss. The news of their defeat stirred the whole nation to make an immense effort to carry out Bajee Rao's scheme of the 'Maratha over all.' An immense army was formed, to which flocked the flower of the Maratha chivalry with many a Hindu ally. The which brings us to the stage of history that was to close on the ominous field of the Black Mango Tree.

The Marathas of 1760 were very different in their organisation from the hordes of mountain rats that Sivajee had led from his mountain fastnesses. With the power and wealth that the federation had acquired they had also evolved the system and pomp of the Mughal state. Their chiefs moved with all the pomp and circumstance that had characterised the Mughal. Their *Kazak* hordes had developed into large bodies of organised horse. They had masses of trained artillery and infantry, imbued with some portion of the French discipline that Lally had introduced in Southern India and Bussy in the Dekkan. It was a mighty moving army that moved North from the Dekkan to win an empire. Shuda-sheo Rao Bhao, a cousin of Balajee the then Peshwa, commanded the forces of the twice-born. With the enlarging of the Maratha state the power and leadership had passed to some extent from the rough half-Rajput Maratha of the hills to the fair handsome Brahmin clans, who could hold their own with Mughal manners and procedure. But what they had gained in wisdom they had lost in stubbornness.

With 'The Bhao,' as Shuda-sheo was always called, rode the flower of Maharastra and all the appointments and luxurious fittings of the conquered Muhammadan powers of Southern India. There was Mulhar Rao Holkar and all his lances, Mahdajee Rao Sindia, illegitimate son of the reigning Sindia, to become later the greatest of all Marathas save only Sivajee, Wiswas Rao son of the Peshwa, Govind Panth of Bundelkand with his Bandelas, Suraj Mull the Jāt chief from Bhurtpur, and many another Rajput and Maratha

chieftain. With them marched also the mercenary corps of Ibrahim Khan Gardee, so called from having been commander of Bussy's French trained bodyguard at Hyderabad. His corps consisted of 10,000 men trained after the manner of the French, with gunners and light field-batteries. Twenty thousand well-disciplined horse and the Gardee corps formed the *pièce de résistance* with the Grand Army, but thousands of light cavalry were also there. The great park of artillery was worthy of the Mughals themselves in their prime, heavy lumbering tiger-mouthed pieces drawn by long pairs of yoked bullocks, lighter pieces with short spans, field-guns after French models, light *sher batchas*¹ and hosts of *shuter-nals* or swivel-guns a-camel back. The Maratha host numbered 55,000 horse, 15,000 disciplined foot, and 300 guns. With followers and all the evil entourage of Oriental armies it numbered 300,000 souls that descended on the impoverished country like a flight of locusts, leaving starvation and misery among the wretched villages on its route.

First to Delhi came the Bhao, which according to custom was stripped of such wealth as Nadir Shah and Ahmed the Duranni had left it. Yet so did Delhi and the seat of the throne attract wealth that it is said that the Marathas found seventeen lakhs to take away. Then, since the time was not yet ripe for declaring a Maratha Empire, a prince of the blood, son of the rightful heir, was proclaimed Emperor and in his name the Bhao acted.

All the while that these hosts were assembling, Ahmed Shah the Duranni lay at his Indian headquarters of Anupshahr on the upper Ganges organising the Afghan colonist and the forces of Islam generally. Early in the autumn he left his cantonment and crossed the Jumna, and the Bhao moved out from Delhi to the field of Panipat, already the historic battlefield of Northern India, and entrenched the whole of his force round the town of that name. Marching up the Jumna to Panipat, the Marathas had drawn first blood by falling on an Afghan detachment, and a little later the Afghans drove a portion of the Hindus, who had moved afield, back into their entrenchment at Panipat with heavy loss. Then began that curious wait and watch to seize the better grip, after the manner of wrestlers, that is so characteristic of Asiatic warfare. It was the same in the pre-Napoleonic wars of the Continent. Two vast armies would sit and watch each other and wait an opportunity instead of making that same for itself, as did the Master.

¹ Lion's whelps.

The accounts to hand of the battle itself are numerous and authentic. Grant Duff, the historian of the Marathas, himself knew several of them who had been there. The account given by Kashi Punt, one of the secretaries in the Afghan camp, is full of detail. As regards the appearance of the troops, those who saw the procession at His Majesty's state entry into Delhi in 1911 will have seen retainers armed and dressed as were the rival armies of Panipat. Some of the armour and weapons carried were no doubt the identical accoutrements worn there.

Now it has been already mentioned that what the Marathas of 1760 had acquired in the matter of pomp and appearance they had lost in the way of rough-and-tumble soldiering talent and guerrilla accomplishments. It is ever thus with the wilder folk. The regular Afghan army created by Shere Ali was ridden over by the British when it stood to them at Charasiab. A thousand Ghilzais on the mountain-side, each a law unto himself, were far more dangerous than five times that number of regular soldiers. The same applies to the Dutch in South Africa. The old veldt Dutch were a harder nut to crack than your tame Dutchman with Krupp guns to hamper him. At any rate the great moving columns of infantry and the lumbering yoke of the forty-pounder gun trains did not appeal to the older and wiser men as the system that had brought success to the Marathas in the past. It was the eternal harassing, the ceaseless sting and hover, that had made them so indefeasible to the heavier Mughal hosts. Suraj Mull the Jât chief and Holkar himself had urged this on the Bhao, but the latter, enamoured of the borrowed trappings of the Mughal, had elected to continue on his ponderous way.

So for want of a desire to close, and disdainful of ancestral tactics, the Maratha host sank into inertia in their entrenchments at Panipat. Out in front of the two armies champions met in single combat, and the soldiery looked on and cheered. But all the while the Rohilla horse usurped the traditional Maratha functions, and cut off the mighty host of the latter from the resources of the country round, even as Holkar would have served them. At last it came about that waiting for the opportunity that they would not make, the Marathas found themselves at the end of two months with their supplies run dry.

We may here pause and look at this great standing camp. In the centre near the town the huge embroidered tents and *shamianas* of the Bhao and his immediate following. Scattered round

the considerable area occupied lay the tents and banners of the various great chiefs, the great *Bhaqwan Jhanda*, the Hindu flag, wrapping its staff in front of the Bhao's camp. Close to the Bhao was the main park of artillery, big brass guns on lumbering teakwood carriages, with great heavy tumbrils alongside. Behind the chiefs' camps the picket lines of their horsed retainers, whose green and red saddles would be lying behind their horses. The long lances would be piled in clumps behind the horses, while the troopers rested close to the rear picket pegs. The camp of the *Gardees* would present a more regular appearance with the arms piled after the French fashion, each commandant flying his camp colour. In every back-yard in the town and outlying hamlets would be crowded the henna-dyed horses of the irregular cavalry, and their baggage attendants, tethered with leather thongs, blue beads round their necks, and the print of a henna-dipped hand on the hindquarters, ready to squeal and bite at the first opportunity. Behind the troops would be the long bazaars, for an Eastern army feeds itself from the booths of the camp suttlers, who follow an army at their will, and whose stocks were carried and replenished from the pack-bullock convoys of the Brinjaras—that race of hereditary carriers, with whom the wise Arthur Wellesley concluded a contract based on mutual confidence when he took the field against the Maratha forty years later. Without this travelling carrier race admirably suited for carrying the requirements of the vast armies of the day, the long moves of troops and followers across the length and breadth of India would have been impossible. In the long bivouacked bazaars would be the meat sellers, the grain merchants, sweetmeat vendors, jewellers, parched grain and *Kabab* sellers, tobacconists, spirit sellers, tinkers, fiddlers, dancing girls, Delilah in all her forms, mendicants, holy men, friars, and half the bad characters of the countryside, all kept within some semblance of order by the *Bazaar Choudri*.

If you would picture such a party leaving camp, you must go to the mouth of the Gomal Pass on the border of Waziristan in April, where, to this day, you will see the Ghilzai clans returning to Afghanistan for the summer, armed to the teeth and moving off in succession to tuck of drum under control of an official corresponding to the bazaar master of a Mughal or Maratha *campo*. With them you will see their women and children, their grain sellers and their donkeys and pack bullocks, their camels and their followers crowding up the passes in controlled disorder.

It will be well imagined how such an army with such a following ate up the country-side, as it moved and stripped bare the environment of a permanent halt, and how essential a free access for the Brinjara convoys would be. When the British clung to the ridge at Delhi, the whole country-side fed them. In the days of the break-up of the Mughal Empire no one would feed anybody except by force of arms, and there were no free markets in Panipat to which the villagers flocked with their produce. So it will be realised how this multitude soon came to its last supply of grain. For not only did the fighting troops and their horses eat their fill, but this moving town of shops meant 200,000 followers to the 100,000 combatants of all kinds. These followers included many of the families of the men, for half the country-side in those days lived a wandering life. Beside the camels and the bullock droves and the elephants would tramp the women of the *syces* and other menials with their children, *un qui marche, un qui tette, un qui vient!*—a strange mixture of peace and war, while the ladies of the leaders' families, and those who battled for their own hand, rode in little covered bullock-carts, peeping from between the crimson curtains, or swayed in the laquered camel *khajawahs*.¹

So it came about that the great expedition, to put an end to the rule of Islam and the Mussulman nobles, was in a bad plight, and by the middle of January the bazaar masters reported that there was no more food in camp at all. The Bhao, after a midnight council, sent a last appeal to some of the leaders in the opposite camp, whom he hoped yet might join him, and resolved to sally forth to fight for his life. It was in no spirit of conquest that the members of the Hindu confederacy mustered their soldiers on the morning of January 17, 1761. The last rations had been eaten at daybreak, and the troops formed with all the signs of despair, their faces smeared with ashes, their turbans dishevelled, and their hearts steeled for death but not for victory, which is a poor spirit to arm with, on a cold morning. We may perhaps here glean some glimpse of the future prospects for Pan-Hinduism as a world-power. At any rate all accounts agree as to the mental state of the Marathas and their allies.

Their muster consisted of perhaps 30,000 good troops and 200 guns of all sorts. Formed in a line of masses with the left thrown forward, they emerged from their entrenchments and moved towards

¹ Panniera.

the Afghans. Ibrahim Khan and his *Gardee* corps, with their guns, formed this leading left. In the centre was the Bhao with his own troops, and the cavalry of Sindia and Holkar were on the right.

Ahmed Shah, a man of surprising activity and alertness, had been on the watch all night and had just lain down, when the Maratha advance was reported. A short reconnaissance showed that the alarm was true enough, and he at once marshalled his hosts. His main forces consisted of some 28,000 Afghan horsemen on heavy Turkoman horses (heavy, that is, compared with the Marathagarron) wearing mail, and a similar number of Rohilla horse—that is to say, Afghan colonists of Hindustan, from Rohilcund and other similar centres. His foot soldiery consisted of some 38,000 Hindustani infantry, matchlock-men and pikes, with a total of 80 guns. The Rohillas faced Holkar and Sindia and also held part of the centre next to a mass of Afghan cavalry. Two brigades of Persian cavalry faced the *Gardees* and a large body of Afghans were in reserve on each flank. The Marathas came on with a murmur of *Hur Huree*, *Hur Huree*, rising to their war-cry of *Hur Hur Mahadeo*!—the Afghans waiting to receive their attack. At first the disciplined array of Ibrahim Khan drove asunder the Persian ranks and rent a Rohilla corps, so that 3,000 are said to have been slain by them in the first attack, and the courage and temper of the Hindus rose and the masses joined contact on all sides. The great *Bhagwan Jhunda* swayed and moved forward, as the loud cries of *Hur Hur Mahadeo* showed that the twice-born were a-top the crest of battle. Mass after mass of Afghans thundered into the fray, and the great guns seemed to be firing on friend and foe alike. '*Allah Ho Akhbar! Din Din! Fatteh Muhammad!*'¹ yelled the men of Islam, and strove to get at the great Hindu banner by the Black Mango Tree, as the Normans strove for the Standard of England by the Hoar Apple-tree on Telham Down and Saintlache.

Then, after varying fortune for three furious hours, Ahmed Shah, with an eye trained to *Grand'guerre*, loosed his great reserve divisions of heavy Afghan horse, to ride through and through the lighter cavalry of Hindustan and the Dekkan. For three hours had the *Gardee* corps on the Maratha left carried all before them, but within an hour of the launch of the Afghan reserves, the whole of the Hindu confederacy was broken beyond recovery. Here and there knots of the *Gardees* held their own in squares and clumps,

God is Almighty! The Faith! The Faith! Victory to Muhammad!

but for the most part the field was nothing but a slaughter of the flying, and prisoners, and of men too broken even to fight for life. Fierce in the battle the Afghan spared none in his hour of victory; man, woman, and child, priest and leader, spearman and water-carrier, were overwhelmed in one vast holocaust.

Grant Duff records that 200,000 soldiers and followers from the hosts of the Bhao were slain. The Bhao, committing his family to the care of Holkar, had turned his *Dekkani* charger and galloped from the field, to die unknown, till his headless trunk was found later. Wiswas Rao, the Peshwa's nephew, was slain, Jankojee Sindia was taken captive and slain next day; Mahdajee Sindia escaped sore wounded, after a long ride with the Afghans close behind. The gallant Ibrahim Gardee fell into the enemy's hands wounded and did not survive, and lesser chiefs innumerable shared the same fate. Never had the Marathas and their allies fallen into such a disaster; the flower of every clan perished with their chiefs, and mourning was spread into every family of note and every mountain village of the Western Ghauts.

Away on the banks of the Narbadda the Peshwa, who had heard of the leaguer of Panipat, was pushing north with reinforcements, when to him came a *coosid* (a mounted messenger) from a banker who had accompanied the army of the Bhao. And the message he bore ran 'Two pearls have been dissolved, twenty-seven gold mohurs have been lost, and of the silver and copper the total cannot be cast up.'

Soon followed the scattered fugitives, and grief and despair took possession of the Peshwa's army. Sadly he broke up his camp and fell back on Poona, to die of a broken heart in the following year. It was the news of Flodden Field over again. From every upland homestead, and from every bastioned village in the Dekkan and Malwa, the youth of Maharashtra had joined the squadrons of the Bhao. From the sun-scorched hills of Rajasthan to the green slopes and woods of the Western Ghauts arose the sound of mourning. Blessed are the twice-born who burn on the pyre, but lost for ever were the hundred thousand souls whose bodies lay headless on the field of Panipat, urburied and unburnt.

Kashi Punt relates that of the followers the younger women and children were carried off by the victors, and that tens of thousands of male prisoners, fighting-men and followers, were formed into lines, given parched grain and some water, and then beheaded for the glory of God and His prophet. During the long

years of his life, in which he was to become so famous, Mahdajee Sindia would ever imagine that he heard the hammer of the boofs and the broken panting of his Afghan pursuer's horse. For miles had Sindia been pursued by 'Lutf Ullah Populzai, a swinefed reiver of the North.' The escape of Sindia, with all the colour of the battle is splendidly portrayed in Mr. Rudyard Kipling's 'With Sindia to Delhi'; especially is the supposed treachery of Mulhar Rao Holkar dwelt on, who men say failed to bring his 30,000 horses into the fray with any effect, in spite of constant and imploring messages from the Bhao.

'Ho Anand Rao Nimbalkar Ride! Get aid of Mulhar Rao.'

But Holkar's horse were flying and our chiefest chiefs were cold,
And like a flame among us leapt the long lean Northern knife.'

Such was the third and last great battle of Panipat, when the sons of the Prophet fought the twice-born for dominion in Hindustan which was to pass from either. Under the guiding hand and wise statecraft of Mahdajee Sindia, the Maratha was again to come to great power, but always under the nominal rule of the Great Moghal, whom they held as puppet, till Generals Arthur Wellesley and Gerald Lake brought the house of cards to the ground at Assaye and Laswari, more than forty years after the stricken field of Panipat. During those forty years the Marathas and the English were ever quarrelling, and though the English brought them low, the great blow to their supremacy was struck when the flower of their chivalry lay dead on the plains by the Black Mango Tree at the hands of Ahmed Shah the Duranni.

How Sindia 'the *Patel*' came to be the power behind the throne for so many years, and to hold all the threads of peace and war and policy in his wise hands, is a story too long to be told as a sequel to the tragedy at Panipat. Or how he and De Boigne the Savoyard formed an army that none in Hindustan, saving always the English, could face, and which so long as Sindia lived was never allowed to clash with these same English—that too is a story in itself. When Sindia died, the ship of state, as he had conceived it, went crashing on the rocks, and no one had *nous* enough to steer it off. The new Sindia, the Peshwa, Holkar the Bonsla, all the great chiefs of the confederacy bit the dust in succession, and their French-trained armies fell, as De Boigne always knew they must, before the red-coat sepoys of the English

and their hard-bitten European soldiery. The poor old puppet of Delhi, blind Shah Alum, became a British pensioner, and the Mughal was never again to form a nominal rallying-point for the princes of India, save only for the instinct of the Imperial tradition which brought the mutinous soldiery of '57 once again to the rose-red palace at Delhi for a few months of dreams and madness. And behind the English in this matter of the Marathas we may ever see the ghost of Ahmed Shah the Duranni Emperor of Kabul.

As the sound of his northern pursuer's horse rang ever in Sindia's memory, so for many generations the fear of the invading North lay on India; and now that India forgets, and murmurs ever at an alien's yoke, be it never so benevolent, it is well that this same India should remember that this same North still stands, hungry and fierce and poor, waiting for the day when the British frontier guard shall mount for the last time, and once again leave bare the road to the Bikaner and the wealth of Hindustan. The frontier hills still dream of it as Sir Alfred Lyall makes the old Pindari dream.

'My father was an Afghan and came from Kandahar,
He rode with Nawab Amir Khan in the old Maratha War;
From the Dekkan to the Himalay five hundred of our clan,
They asked no leave of prince or chief as they swept through
Hindustan.'

G. F. MacMUNN.

A GRANDFATHER.

A GRANDPARENT is, in the opinion of his grandchildren, born rather than made. To imagine our ancestors as descendants is an irreverence alien to childish imagination. The youth of these same ancestors has about it something mythical. When our grandmother talks of her girlhood we listen respectfully. The period of which she speaks is so vague, so remote, that if she should refer to her friendship with Noah, or to the admiration she saw in the eyes of Henry VIII. as she curtsied before his throne, we should feel no wonder. Anything may have been possible in her days, for she has come out of that mysterious time—the past, a period that to childhood is vast and unbounded as the prairie, knowing neither milestones nor the limitations of centuries.

Grandparents stand either for awe or for delight. They are monuments or they are hearth fires. To most children their presence is occasional. The unfamiliarity of them is their charm. They are like drawing-rooms opened only for great festivals. The fragrance of the past should cling about them. The true grandparent has always a daïs in a child's heart.

I have not seen my grandfather since I was eight years old. When he died I shed no tears, because the possibility of wearing crape around my hat was so exquisite that it eclipsed sorrow. Death, especially a death that occurs at a distance, is interesting and exciting to children. Bereavement lends one a certain dignity that is pleasing at an age when dignity is liable to many shocks. I can remember the curious change that came over the day after the telegram brought the news. It was a weekday, but it took to itself of a sudden the dignity of Sunday; it was a day apart, like Good Friday, in the calm of its sorrowing. I suppose my sisters were at school, for I do not remember discussing the news with anyone but myself. My mind said: 'Grandpapa is dead. He is gone to heaven. Now we shall go to Knockmaroon.' Knockmaroon his old home and heaven his new seemed so near and so much alike that the change for my grandfather appeared but a small one. I pictured no difference in him. I saw him wearing his embroidered smoking-cap and his long coat as he bowed before the Throne, or was greeted by angels. The angels and the Throne were dim, but the familiar figure of my grandfather was clear and unchanged.

'On Sunday,' said my mind, 'you will go to church in a black hat and a black dress. People will stare; that will be very interesting.' I walked deliberately down the garden and climbed the wall near a door that opened on a street. I saw, as I had hoped, some schoolfellows passing by.

'Why are you not at school?' they asked.

'My grandfather is dead.'

My position on the wall above them was typical of my inward state of exalted mourning. They went away without remark. We pulled no faces, exchanged neither insults nor commonplaces. The dignity of death was upon us.

Because I never saw him in decline, never knew him less than vividly alive, he has been always a happy memory. I did not realise his death—I have not realised it now. That sad change that makes familiar figures become strangely august and aloof never touched him in my thoughts. He has not left the region of laughter.

I know that once upon a time this Irish grandfather of mine was young and unmarried. He was in love with the beautiful daughter of a schoolmaster in Reading. His mother advised him to go over to England and make the venture. He returned a rejected lover. According to the story or myth, as I have it in my mind, he told the news to his mother as she stood on the steps of their home.

'You will have just time to catch the next boat,' said she; 'go and try again.'

From Dublin to Reading, and in those prehistoric days of lengthy travelling! What a journey for a possible 'No.' But he returned an affianced man.

Who could doubt it? So gay, so gentle, so full of chivalry, he was born to be a grandfather.

My memory of him centres round the library. One usually found him there. I never remember him without a black velvet cap on his head. It was something between a skull-cap and a biretta, and was embroidered, probably by one of my aunts. He had white Dundreary whiskers, and he wore blue glasses as his sight was failing. To a child, he seemed rather as another child of greater intelligence and greater sympathy. One could never have said of him, 'He is grown up; he will not understand.'

If the matter in hand were the funeral of a bird found dead among the leaves, he brought to the function all the solemnity and decorous interest of a mourner. He had a little accordion,

and on this he would perform funeral music. But, like a real child, he was earnest. He repeated prayers and psalms over the deceased, and then dried his granddaughter's eyes with his silk handkerchief.

I have a vague picture of him in a blue shawl and a wide-awake hat. I seem to be holding his hand, and we are both hurrying out of sight, perfectly happy but with uncertain conscience.

With one accord we went to the path in the woods that we called the Mossy Walk. Here we collected sticks and cones, and made a fire. To make a fire is one of the supreme joys of childhood, because it is to play with the forbidden thing; it is to tempt Providence; it is to court the hideous fate of 'foolish Harriett' who played with matches. But with a grandfather the forbidden thing became radiantly possible. We did it, and rejoiced in our fire. He was always a benign deity who smiled when others looked askance. He did not avoid damp places, but gave himself up to a child's desire for dabbling. It seems to me a laughable paradox in human affairs that my grandfather was a business man, whose work took him daily to an office where vast ledgers claimed his attention. I have a suspicion, not unfounded, perhaps, that inside his blotting-paper there were frequently hidden little pictures, verses, valentines for his granddaughters, parodies, all those *jeux d'esprit* that we knew so well.

This hasty, serious age has no time for St. Valentine and his little courtesies, but my grandfather was one of his sworn knights. Alas! there are but few of these valentines left, but this is one written in a day turned topsy-turvy by Darwin.

'A DARWINIAN VALENTINE.

'Yes, dearest, great Natural Selection
Has chosen you out to be mine;
And I know that by heart's predilection,
And Survival of Fittest, I'm thine.

I'm so glad, dear, you're fond of old Darwin,
And love to pore over his page:
You're fond, too, of Wallace and Huxley,
And men in advance of the age.

'Tis pleasant to think our First Mother
Had a whiskered baboonish-like face,
And that Adam could swarm up a gum-tree,
With his tail as a finishing grace.

When we two were but Globigerinæ
 Three millions of ages ago,
 We found in our mud protoplasmic)
 That life was uncommonly slow.

A million of years slipped away, dear—
 Even now I remember the bliss—
 You gave me beneath the Pacific
 An Ichthyosaurian *kiss*.

Nor have I forgotten the day, love,
 When you said you would give me your hand,
 As we hopped with the nimble marsupials
 O'er the sunny Australian land.

And oh! when a million years later,
 We were learning together to speak,
 And responsive to my loving grunt, you
 Oft gave an affectionate squeak,

Then did we not strive and endeavour
 The smallest improvement to reach;
 Oh, how rapidly vanished those ages,
 While we bow-wowed ourselves into speech,

But watching for thousands of æons,
 Alas! much I fear that there springs
 From your shoulders what sometimes resembles
 The faintest suspicion of *wings*.

So after a few happy billions,
 My bliss is to meet with its bane,
 For you'll open you fully formed pinions
 And soar to the Stellar Inane.'

My grandfather had sympathy with all lovers and a due appreciation of romance, but of an imprudent pair he once remarked, 'Those who marry on faith and hope generally end by living on charity.'

He was himself prodigal of charity in so much that he was a prey to the beggars of the neighbourhood. When some one protested that he often helped the unworthy, he answered gaily that he could not but admire the ingenuity of their stories. However, on one occasion, being asked by two petitioners for money for a journey to Liverpool he suggested sending down his steward to

buy their tickets for them at the boat. For a moment this disconcerted the suppliants, who had looked to get ready money. However, one recovered himself enough to say, 'Ah! your honour, but we're thinking of going to Liverpool by land.'

At the time I remember my grandfather, he was so nearly blind that if he wrote letters my aunt would write a translation of the words underneath. Now he was more than ever the victim of most unworthy guile. A woman was seen to beg from him at one side and, shifting the baby on her arm, slip round to his other side to obtain a second dole. However, this mean act was redeemed by another, who, finding that she had been given a half-sovereign in mistake for a sixpence, returned it to the giver—the best policy, this turned out, for she received a florin immediately, and was later put on his pension list.

Among the verses that he wrote, no doubt in the spare minutes at the office where he, most quaint of business men, spent his day, are these lines on an accident that happened at the Palace, Armagh. They are called—

'CATASTROPHE.

'The great Lord Primate sat in his chair,
The hugeous Bishop of Derry was there;
Many Arch-Deacons and many a Dean,
Rectors and Curates, some fat and some lean,
With many a sturdy Canon between.
Here and there a mild Rural Dean
With snug Bishops' Chaplains were to be seen
Precentor, Succentor and all complete
For the eye to gaze at was really a treat.
For a goodly show these Clergy made
Each in his cassock and surplice arrayed.
No popish vestments there you could see,
But badges of every collegiate degree,
Bachelor, Doctor, Master and all
Stood marshalled against the Cathedral wall,
Upreared in a pyramid grand and bright,
Their surplices beamed in the noonday light.
Then the Primate rose with a dignified look,
Though he had no candle, no bell, no book;
He called aloud in a voice of austerity
The photographer's there, so in truth and in verity
Let us all stand up and go down to posterity.

The photographer came (his name I won't mention),
And, fixing his camera, called out "Attention!"
When at once at that word, a crash was heard,
A breaking, a cracking, a smashing of planks,
And a terrible stir amongst clerical shanks,
With a sudden come down of Episcopal ranks.
Some cried and some roared out for help loudly calling,
In fact the whole scene was immensely appalling,
But tho' on all sides rose most pitiful cries
For assistance, from doctor or surgeon or nurse,
Still what gave rise to a pleasant surprise—
Not one of them all was a penny the worse.'

There was in the writer of these lines something of Ariel, a spirit that must have chafed against the solemn business of the office, the serious busy faces of his clerks. But he drove to Dublin every day, and returned in the evening to be himself, the delightful amateur of many arts, the reader, the thinker, half scientist, half poet, and perfect grandfather. He was a restless sleeper, and often rose in the middle of the night to bathe his head and to read his Greek Testament. In his spare hours he studied German philosophy and astronomy. I remember being brought—from bed, I suppose—to look at the moon through his telescope. In a vision, half waking and half sleeping, I saw a wonderful cheese-like disc.

'Do you see mountains?' asked my grandfather.

'I see them smoking,' I said.

Another night we looked at Saturn and his satellites, and it seemed a dream wrought by this magician of a grandfather who stood by the open window.

My memories of him, as I have said, belong chiefly to the library. There was a round table, at which he sometimes sat. In this table were drawers containing many marvels dear to children. He had a burning-glass, and on a sunny day he could set a piece of paper on fire by the concentration of a sunbeam. Oh, intrepid grandparent, more original and more daring than that foolish Harriett who played with matches, the merest commonplace of mischief! He had magnets of all sizes and a little fan-like instrument with four eye-glasses of different coloured glass. Through one the world was radiant and golden, through another the cold blue of 'faërie lands forlorn,' through a third an enchanting rose-colour, through a fourth a lurid and wonderful red. This transfiguration of familiar things had an indescribable charm.

It must have been his idea to leave a small hole in a window otherwise blocked up. In this hole was set a diminishing glass that showed a Lilliputian world beyond it. It was our delight as children to go turn by turn to stand outside this little magic window. To the child in the library there appears a pigmy dancing in a tiny and far-distant world where the laurel-bushes grew no taller than golden feather. Such innocent trickery was my grandfather's delight. He loved these things as we loved them. When he bought us toys it was, I am sure, because he longed to play with them himself.

I remember certain evenings when the mountains were hidden in mist, the rain descended like a curtain, and the meadows were soaking; evenings when it was impossible to go out even as far as the stable or the haggard. At these times the library was a haven. The wet world beyond the window had a sort of sad fascination. It was pleasant to sit on the window seat and to watch the raindrops jumping on the gravel and the chaffinches bathing in the puddles. The solemn rows of books became interesting and the blind-eyed busts of Milton and Scott on the top of the shelf gained a sort of sinister attraction. Then my grandfather reigned supreme as the story-teller, the Shanachie in our midst.

He carried us away to Ithaca or to Avalon, and we became acquainted with Ulysses, that pious humbug; with Penelope and Circe and Nausicaa, with the gallant Argo and the great bow that only its master could bend; or we heard of Arthur and Guinevere, of Tristram and Isolde, who had given her name to the nearest village, Chapelizod—the Chapel of Isolde. We were not constrained to a fatigued attention, for the stories went on whilst we built Babel-like towers of bricks or played with the red and white chessmen. I know that these old heroic tales were woven into the tapestry of our thoughts, for children deck their minds with romance as the ladies of old decked their castle walls.

He had wonderful rhymes, too, for a child who sat on his knee. I have never since come across them, and now there are only a few words I remember like old spells heard in a dream. One began:

'Oh, what a town! what a wonderful metropolis!

Such a hurly-burly never was seen;

Mayor, Common Councillors, nobility and populace

Hurrying from Cripplegate to Turnham Green.'

Another random recollection began thus :

'The night was dark, the wind blew keen
In fitful gusts and squalls,
When this conversation I heard between
The Monument and St. Paul's.

'The Monument's voice was small and choice
And rather weak than strong
But the voice of St. Paul's it shook the walls
Like the sound of a Chinese gong.'

From him we learnt 'An Austrian army awfully arrayed' and many another time-honoured rhyme.

He was a great reader. Now when I open the doors of certain bookshelves I seem to find much of his spirit within. He collected the poets of his day. There is a long row of the little slim brown and green volumes in which Tennyson first went out on to the world. I love to see his 'Alexander Ferrier' on the flyleaf, and there to catch some echo of his comments in the pencillings on the margins. There are three volumes of Austin Dobson. These must surely have charmed him. And here is many a forgotten little poet that sang a song and then expired.

The papers I connect with him are the *Athenæum* and *Nature*. For Sunday, he had the periodicals of more than one religion, for he took, I fancy, an elfish delight in hearing several sides of the same question vehemently expressed. He was a regular attendant at church, but the bareness and heavy solemnity of his parish church must often have chafed a spirit so truly Catholic, gentle, happy, childlike, and yet strongly intellectual.

I have learnt of late something of his school days in an Irish school of some fame in its day. The school was, however, no better than others of its time: the master a tyrannical bully, the boys rather a *Comus* rout, for lack, it is certain, of proper discipline or any religious ideal.

My grandfather, sensitive and high-souled, must have found a fierce ordeal in this embryo world with its embryo vices. But in some mystic boyish fashion of his own he had taken the Blessed Virgin Mother as his liege Lady. His honour was here, and from that day forth he was one of her knights. For him womanhood had always the sanctity, beauty, and mystery of the Madonna. The very word 'chivalry' brings him to my mind. For in all his

dealings with women, of whatever age or rank, there was a courtly deference, that worship which perforce must draw out worth in its object.

To his wife he was always a devout lover. When together they kept their golden wedding, he addressed these lines to her, recalling a fancy of their courtship, her flower name—the rose unique.

‘ I called her once the fairest rose
Who now sits by my side,
In beauty to my heart as sweet
As when she was my bride.

How many years have passed away
Since that white rose so fair,
That blossoms still within my heart,
Was first implanted there.

And yet no time can e’er efface
The memory of that day
When she was mine, to steal one grace
From my sweet rose away.

And has she not with brightest bloom
Crowned lovingly my brow
With buds and blossoms whose perfume
Is life unto me now ?

The vista of the past appears
For me in memory’s sight
To form with sunshine and with tears
A rainbow path of light.’

Two years after this golden wedding he went on that last journey whose sad circumstance seemed so alien to his happy spirit. There is a cross in Powerscourt churchyard that marks his grave; but what had he to do with death, our merry grandfather ?

He had always been a wanderer, travelling, as he said, by the train of circumstances. He had the pilgrim soul—no mournful pilgrim of pea-ridden shoon, but the brave, much-enduring, adventurous soul of the pilgrim who presses towards a kingdom of heart’s desire, a city of infinite gladness and noble company.

So when he died it seemed to me that he had gone away for a time on some pleasant journey. Death was unbelievable. To his grandchildren he had been always among the Immortals.

W. M. LETTS.

SHREW AND TERMAGANT.

A DOMESTIC STORY OF TUDOR TIMES.

BY SIR HENRY LUCY.

IN a fireproof muniment room in the basement of the south-western pavilion of Wollaton Hall, Nottinghamshire, the residence of Lord Middleton, is preserved a rare collection of manuscripts going back to Tudor time and beyond. The precious documents are packed in parcels and boxes. In the former, numbering some three hundred, are heaped together the older manuscripts. They have been preserved on the principle upon which Disraeli garnered his correspondence and memoranda for the use of a perplexed biographer. He threw them into a box, and when it was full to the top he closed the lid, sat on it, locked the box, and started a fresh one.

Happily at Wollaton there was a lady in the case who, with loving care and infinite trouble, did a notable service to posterity. She was Cassandra Willoughby, Duchess of Chandos, daughter of Francis Willoughby, known in his day as an eminent philosopher. This daughter of an ancient house (whose family name, by the way, was originally Bugge, the founder being a Nottingham merchant in the reign of King John) set herself the task of bringing order out of chaos. With painstaking hand she arranged the manuscripts, compiling the history of the Willoughbys of Wollaton. It is from them that the ninth Baron Middleton descends through the female line, inheriting, among other property, Wollaton Hall, one of the most famous specimens of Elizabethan architecture left in the land.

Nestled among the musty manuscripts is a story of domestic life, in the spacious time of Queen Elizabeth, that would have fascinated Thackeray had he chanced to hap upon it. From Queen Elizabeth to a group of serving-men there cross the stage a crowd of characters. The story, as the author of 'Esmond' would doubtless have told it, is concerned with three—Sir Francis Willoughby, his wife, and his sister.

Sir Francis, who built the stately hall, 'because,' as Camden

pettishly opined, 'of the desire to make a foolish display of his wealth,' is described by Cassandra as 'of a very mild, sweet disposition, a lover of hospitality, but a little too apt to be imposed upon by stories from the servants.' In moments of leisure he was accustomed to write sermons for his chaplains to preach to the circle gathered on quiet Sabbath mornings in the family chapel. Worse still, he impoverished himself and hampered his estate by buying land, building houses, attempting to grow woad, and make iron and glass. His wife, daughter of Sir John Lyttleton, of Frankley, Worcestershire, was, according to some authority, 'a woman of wit and virtue but of a turbulent spirit and ungovernable passion.' The third principal personage in the drama played an important part in its development. She was Lady Arundell, sister to Sir Francis Willoughby, and wife of Sir Matthew Arundell. Older than her brother, she had in childhood arrogated a domination over him to which he with characteristic meekness submitted.

All might have gone well, and this story never been written, had Sir Francis, resolved upon marriage, observed the preliminary of communicating particulars to his sister and even asking her consent. Failing this she assumed an attitude of uncompromising opposition to the match. In a succession of letters she carried this so far as to awaken suspicion in her brother's breast that, coveting possession of his estate, she was bent upon preventing a marriage that might in due time produce heiresses if not heirs. The worm showing disposition to turn, Lady Arundell made haste to compromise. She even wrote a letter in which she 'desires to thank him to make her commendations to her sister-that-shall-be with whom she desires to be acquainted.' She protests that she 'wishes them happily to match and joyfully to live together. And may God bless them both with such increase of children as may be most to both their comforts.'

This is all very well. But it was a movement of the kind the French describe as *reculer pour mieux sauter*. Good Mistress Arundell could not prevent an apparently mild-natured, but pig-headed brother going to destruction. But she could keep her eye on the couple and prove, as Scripture hath it, how good is a word in a season.

It is curious to read the form marriage settlements took in the sixteenth century. Sir John Lyttleton, consenting to his daughter's making what was in truth an excellent match,

proposed to give with her the sum of £1,500, a value mightly increased in the currency of to-day. He further undertook to apparel her decently, to bear all the charges attendant upon the marriage, and to give the young couple 'their table with six persons to attend them for three years, and the keeping of six geldings.'

For a while wedded life proved sufficiently happy, Sir Francis being cheered by prospect of an early addition to the family circle. Presently we get a glimpse of Lady Arundell's finger fluttering about the pie. Sir John Lyttleton, ill-used by his attorney, could not make up full payment of the promised £1,500. 'He sends £110 on account.' Lady Arundell, who had always had a poor opinion of the father of her sister-in-law, getting wind of this, writes to know if Sir John had paid the money or set the day when he would. She malignantly wishes her brother better fortune with the rest that is to come than he has hitherto had. As for the bride, she doubts whether she will like housekeeping, especially as she will have greater company than she is accustomed to entertain. She proposes a visit, being very desirous to see how her brother likes housekeeping.

This is more than the wife could stand. Not knowing where else to turn, she wrote to Sir Matthew Arundell stating that she hears his wife is coming to see her brother. 'That,' she adds, 'I desire you would prevent for I am resolved never to stay in the house where your wife is. I believe you are not ignorant what letters your wife had writ to her brother four years before this time in which she represented me as a person fitter for Bridewell than to trouble any gentleman's house.' If Sir Matthew had not seen the correspondence Lady Willoughby will be pleased to show it him as testifying to the ill-will borne towards her by his wife. 'I believe she is coming now with no other end than to break the good agreement between my husband and myself as she hath endeavoured heretofore.'

Lady Arundell was not to be turned aside from well-doing by any such lamentable ebullition of female temper. Her husband having, in the provoking way husbands sometimes fall into, stirred her up by showing her the letter, she took pen in hand and thus addressed her brother. 'If my coming to your house will stand you in any stead, I shall not refuse to come though I have a great dislike to come into wive's company as she has to come into mine.' Continuously troubled by her brother's impracticality, wrought by the hands of the woman against whom she had in vain warned

him, she writes to express her poignant and abiding sorrow that what should be his comfort is his greatest grief. Lying awake at night thinking how he might be helped she advises that 'the next time your wife falls into these rages you should send for her father to come to her, you both going back home with him, boarding there with a convenient number of servants, till such time as she should have lost all wilfulness and will apply herself to her household duties.'

Thus did the good woman undertake to manage for the best everything and everybody, including her sister-in-law's father, whose shortcomings in money matters had verified her opinion of him that he was 'a great dissembler.'

The condition of things in the troubled home at Wollaton was soon after made worse by a plot among the servants to defame their lady, and thereby make a breach between her and Sir Francis. Lady Arundell, from whom no secrets were hid, learning of this cabal, summoned to London one of the servants named Squire. He obeyed the call and reports that 'after a little astronomical talk and about mathematicall books in the Italian tongue she made a large enquiry after her sister the Lady Willoughby viz., what company she kept, etcetera.'

Unfortunately for the lady's purpose, Squire turned out to be a sturdily honest fellow devoted to the service of his mistress. Astronomical talk beguiled him not, nor mathematicall books either. Seeing the hopelessness of the case Lady Arundell bundled him out of the room, and wrote to her brother telling him that 'many stories were bruited by Squire who would be found to be a dissembling knave.'

In June 1575 matters between Sir Francis Willoughby and his wife approached a crisis. She gives him notice of intention to go to Buxton and stay a fortnight. 'But to what place she will return I know not,' Sir Francis writes to his father-in-law, 'and to be in other men's houses refusing the shelter of mine is not convenient. Such journeys are very chargeable and sometimes bring more discredit than relief to a sick person.' Whilst at Buxton, Sir Francis writes expressing the wish that 'with the recovery of her health she may also put on a tractable mind and let her self-will give place to reason.'

This pious hope was not realised. Sir Francis proposing to go to Kingsbury, another of his residences, his wife shortly answered 'that she would not goe thither.' The patient husband asked

whether she would stay at Wollaton or go to Middleton. She retorted that she would stay at home, adding that if she had not been ill lately, he would not have found her there, for she would have been gone before he returned. 'Whither?' asked the bewildered husband. To which she made answer that her friends would not see her destitute, that she would not bear as much as she had done, that she would not with her goodwill tarry any longer with him, who, she said, kept her but as a fool to jest and flout at. Sir Francis, at his wits' end, bethought him of an old friend, one Sir Thomas Cocken. He was the sort of man to act as intermediary in a family quarrel, particularly if he, as it were, appeared casually on the scene without disclosure of his mission. Cunning Sir Francis arranged a little supper with his wife to which was bidden Sir Thomas Cocken, full of goodwill and assured of his competence to settle this matter straight off. Alas, poor Cocken ! The distraught husband, writing to his father-in-law, told how 'he used many friendly speeches to perswade her to be in a better temper, but she grew very angry and wished him to fall to his meat if he had no other speeches to make.' The indomitable Cocken came up again smiling, only to meet with another fall. Adroitly turning the conversation, he commended some of the servants as men of honesty, and wished she would not be so much offended with them. To which she protested that they were 'the veriest villins that ever woman was troubled with.'

After this the worthy Cocken remembered he had promised to be home early, and so departed. Shortly after Lady Arundell, who had been successfully kept at bay for eight years, descended upon the house and announced her intention of staying for three or four nights. Whereupon, as Sir Francis reports in a letter to Sir John Lyttleton, 'your daughter called my sister abominable names and swore she would neither eat, drink nor sleep till she was revenged of her.' This said she went off to the Vicarage and remained there till the enemy had departed.

Further attempt at reconciliation was made during another visit to Kingsbury. This time Sir Francis, believing there was safety in numbers, took with him three friends, including one Sir Foullk Greville. Sir Foullk fared no better with the termagant than did the hapless Cocken. 'Why, Madam,' he asked, opening conversation by going to the root of the matter, 'will you refuse to be ruled by your husband?' To which she gave him a very passionate answer. After this Sir Foullk seems to have inclined

to take a back seat, and the husband, finding it necessary to fill a pause in the conversation, told her what things he disliked. To which 'she answered in mockage that she thanked him and if she had had a cap she would have pulled it off to him.'

Four years later, the inevitable end came. Meanwhile Lady Willoughby had been carrying on high jinks. Left for a while at Kingsbury Hall she had a row with the servants, declared they were bent upon murdering her, and sent down one of her maids to raise the town. Once she threatened to commit suicide, 'and being denied a knife would have stuck her scissors into her body if she had not been prevented.' There was another row with the servants during a visit to Coventry which ended in the mistress throwing herself upon the protection of the alarmed Mayor and the perturbed Aldermen of the town.

In December 1579, Sir John Lyttleton was in treaty with Sir Francis for terms of maintenance after separation. He thinks his daughter can't have less than a gentlewoman to attend her, a nurse for her young son, a maid to help the nurse and to be laundress to them all, a boy needful about the nurse and to make his Lady's fires, and a serving-man to wait upon his Lady. As for their tabling, he trusts Sir Francis will allow for his wife sixteen pence a day, and for each of the servants eightpence a day. With respect to wages, he thinks Sir Francis can't give less than fifty shillings and fourpence a year apiece to the woman, nurse, and man, and to the laundress and boy twenty-six shillings and eightpence apiece. Lady Arundell, hearing what was in the wind and fearing lest direct appeal should be made to Queen Elizabeth in the matter, made haste to write to her brother, 'to perswade him to draw a catalogue of his wife's faults and send papers with it to the secretary Walsingham and the Earl of Leicester to prevent their interceding with the Queen on her behalf.' Nevertheless the Queen took direction of matters into her own hands and, as a document sets forth, obliged the husband to allow his wife £200 a year for separate maintenance.

Lady Willoughby's miserable life came to an end in 1594. Her husband followed her two years later. The interval proved a time of excessive misery, that may be held to atone for any wrongdoing in her earlier domestic arrangements. He quarrelled with the husband of his elder daughter, and, after an angry interview, resolved to punish him by marrying again. The very day his son-in-law quitted Wollaton without bidding him farewell, the old

man sent for Russell his steward and dispatched him to London in search of a new mistress for the Hall. This happened on July 23, 1595. The steward accomplished his mission with a speed far exceeding that of Abraham's servant bent on a similar mission on behalf of Isaac. Before the end of the next month Dorothy Tamworth, a widow, had become Lady Willoughby, and was installed at Wollaton. This precipitate action naturally increased the resentment of Sir Francis' son-in-law and daughter. Sir Francis, weak to the end, submitted wholly to the domination of his second wife on whose behalf he charged his impoverished estate with large sums of money. This done he fell sick and presently died, 'poysoned by his wife' as the family devoutly believed.

A last glimpse of the old man is given in a home letter from his son-in-law, who writes to his wife, 'your father's case is lamentable. He has been ill a fortnight shut up from all his friends. The w—— and her minion have stripped him both of goods and land leaving him nothing where he lies except what hangs upon his back as he sits haling for life and breath.' This letter is dated November 1596. Before the month was ended the lord of Wollaton had found in the tomb much-needed rest.

The musty papers from which this human story is gleaned contain many passages throwing vivid light upon domestic life in England in Tudor times. Here and there we catch sight of Queen Elizabeth as she lived and moved among her admiring but abject subjects. I have mentioned how Her Majesty personally interfered in the arrangements made for the maintenance of Lady Willoughby when separated from her husband. On another occasion the angered Sovereign stepped down from the throne to correct the misdeeds of a couple of aldermen who, in their magisterial capacity, had sent to Bridewell the wives of two reputable citizens, and caused them to be publicly whipped on a charge of being no better than they should be.

The story coming to the Queen's ears she had it investigated, with dire result to the worthy aldermen. They were sent to gaol, kept there three months, and ordered to 'aske the gentelweomen's forgiveness at theyre house, at the Counter, and at Bridewell.' In addition heavy fines were imposed, the larger part finding its way into the Queen's Privy Purse. There remained sufficient, as the chronicler writes, 'so that of a sodaine the too gentelweomen ar becom good mariages.'

During her historic visit to the Midlands described by Walter

Scott in 'Kenilworth' the Queen stopped by the way at Wollaton. Among these precious pages of life is a letter from Sir Francis Knolls giving Sir Francis Willoughby notice of the Queen's coming. It runs thus :

'Her Majesty is determined to tarry two days at your house, that is to say, to-morrow night and Thursday all day, whereof I thought it good to advertise you betimes. Wherefore I think it best for you not to defray Her Majesty, but rather that you should give her some good present of beefs and muttuns, and to keep a good table yourself in some place, if you have any convenient room for it, with two messe of meat. Do herein as you shall think best, but you had need to consider how your provision of drink, etc., may hold out. This Tuesday, the 20th day of July, 1575. Your loving Friend, F. Knolls.'

Note with what precision history repeats itself in relation to the gentleman who signs this courteous but businesslike missive. Though he writes his name as it is here signed he was known among contemporary official records as Sir Francis Knollys, Treasurer of the Royal Household from 1572 to 1596. Three hundred years later another Sir Francis Knollys was, for twenty-three years, Gentleman Usher to another Queen. He is to-day first Viscount of his name, which, foreign to the practice of his kinsman in Queen Elizabeth's reign, he spells with the interposition of a 'y.'

Her Majesty was so pleased with her host's 'beefs and muttuns' and the absence of attempt to make her 'defray' the cost, that before leaving Wollaton she would have knighted him, he at the time ranking as a commoner. At the end of the second day of the royal stay he had, apparently owing to constitutional timidity, retired to quiet quarters and fallen into a state of coma. Anyhow, when the Queen desired him to be brought into the Presence to receive the accolade, he could not anywhere be found, and bestowal of the honour was put off to a later period.

Beefs and muttuns and other appanages of a good table were cheap at the time of Queen Elizabeth's visit to Wollaton. From a carefully kept book of household accounts I find that a cow and a calf might be had for 18s. A whole sheep cost 1s. 8d. Lambs went for a penny each, for which coin you might have a woodcock or a chicken. Geese (economically spelt without a final 'e') were rather expensive, running as high as 4d. apiece. Wine was correspondingly cheap. Claret cost 8d. a gallon, sack 1s.

'Malmyse' sold at the rate of 1s. 4d. a gallon, a reasonable rate that to some extent accounts for the luxury permitted himself for the last bath taken by the Duke of Clarence.

Whilst lacking the capacity for managing larger affairs, Sir Francis Willoughby had a great gift for supervising a household. A document in his writing giving minute instructions for the conduct of his servants lifts the roof off hall and kitchen, disclosing the daily life in the home of an English gentleman of the sixteenth century. He defines the office of the usher as 'first of all to see that the hall be kept clean, and that his groom sees no doggs come there at all.' He is diligently to have a good regard of every person that comes into the hall, 'to the end that if they be of the better sort, notice may be given to the master, or some head officer that they may be entertained accordingly. If of the meaner sort then to know the cause of their coming, and to give advertisement over, to the end they may be despatched and answer'd of their business.' 'Provided always,' here the spirit of hospitality asserts itself, 'that no stranger be suffered to pass without offering him to drink.'

Upon intelligence given from the clerk or the cook that the meat is ready to be served, the usher is bidden 'with a loud voice to command all gentlemen and yeomen to repair to the dresser. At the nether end of the hall he is to meet the service, saying with a loud voice, "Give place, my masters," albeit no man be in the way, and so to goe before the same service untill he come to the upper end of the hall, carrying a little fine rod in his hand, which at all other times he is to carry in his bosom, whereby he is to be known of all strangers to be the usher.' He is also to appoint some one yeoman, at his discretion, in the winter time to carry the torch before service in the night time.

How Malvolio, Olivia's steward, would have enjoyed this opportunity. One can almost hear him cry aloud 'Give place, my masters,' with the more unction in cases where 'albeit no man be in the way.'

Malvolio would have had further chances of asserting himself during progress of the meal. 'All disorders in the hall,' decreed Sir Francis, 'are by the usher to be reformed, and if there shall be any stubborn persons, he is to expell them out of the hall, and to command all men at dinner and supper (if any great noise shall be) to keep silence, saying with a loud voice "Speak softly, my masters." His part is also to walk up and down

the hall, especially in the time of the first dinner and supper, only to call and to command the butler, the pantler, and such as be attendants to bring or fetch any thing that shall be wanting, but not in any wise to doe any service himself, otherwise than diligently to look to the tables.' Wherein his habit resembles those of the well-bred butler of to-day.

Whilst the gentry feasted in the dining chamber, wayfarers, the household servants, and the servants of guests were served in the great hall. Even here distinctions of quality were made. 'If any great press of strangers shall be,' the carefully discriminating master ordained, 'then three or four of the meanest sort of servants, as namely the slaughterman, the carter, and some of the best of the grooms of the stable, or such like, are to be appointed by the usher to attend in the hall. If no strangers be, then the grooms of the stable, and the allowed pages and boys in the house are to attend upon the first dinner. By way of guerdon they are to have the remainder thereof, with some little help out of the kitchen, as the usher shall see cause. Likewise the pages at the latter dinner shall attend upon the gentlemen and yeomen. At this table the remainder of the meat after dinners and suppers is to be put by the usher into the almes table, which is always by him to be kept safely locked, to be distributed among the poor such days as shall be appointed.'

Winchester boys will remember, and visitors to the old school may have observed, that in the dining hall there stands one of these ancient almes tables in the form of a spacious chest of carved wood into which after every meal are dropped the leavings on the wooden platters and dishes from which the meal is served. Subsequently the agglomeration, which like the Scotch haggis contains much fine confused feeding, is distributed among the poor.

From the household book, kept by Sir Francis with pious care that did not overlook a halfpenny, it appears that though food and drink were cheap the expenditure where open house was daily kept was considerable. From November 1572 to December 1573, a period of fourteen months, household disbursements averaged close upon £100 a month. The precise sum set forth in poor dead-and-gone Sir Francis's handwriting is £1,394 18s. 8½d.

FRIENDSHIP'S PENALTY.

It was in a Venice hotel that Raymond Oliphant, picking up a copy of the *Times* saw Sir Samuel Brereton's name heading the obituary notices and saluted it with an involuntary ejaculation which caused some of the other occupants of the reading-room to look up and stare at him. He responded by a forced, futile cough, as everybody does when betrayed into snoring or making other unseemly noises in public; then he took cover behind the newspaper, holding it up with hands which shook a little, and read the following paragraph:

'We regret to record that Sir Samuel Brereton, M.P., died yesterday in a nursing home, after an operation from which he failed to rally. At the last three general elections the deceased gentleman, who received the honour of knighthood some years ago, was returned unopposed, in the Liberal interest, for Slackpool, where the extensive ironworks associated with his name are situated. Although not accounted a strong party man and never prominent as a debater, Sir Samuel was highly esteemed, both in the House of Commons and out of it, for his integrity of character and his generous benefactions. It scarcely needs to be mentioned that Lady Brereton's reputation as one of the most charming and gracious of London hostesses has long been established. Sir Samuel, a man of robust physique, had never, it is said, suffered from a day's illness until quite recently, and the news of his death at the comparatively early age of fifty-eight will come as a great shock and grief to his numerous friends.'

Not to the one who was thus abruptly made aware of it. Of course it was a shock in the sense of being a most startling surprise, but grieved Oliphant could not be, though he had liked old Sam Brereton very well and might have been sorry to hear of his removal from the earthly scene, had it not been for what his removal implied. It implied—and for the moment that overwhelming fact was all it did imply—that Hermione was free! Hermione, who had been the one love of Oliphant's rather colourless, rather desultory life, and to whom, as he could not but know, he had been dearer than everything in the world, save that clearly recognised duty which had rendered her the best of wives and mothers. He could not but know it, in spite of her having told him so once only, many years

back, when a mutual avowal had been, he hardly remembered how, forced from them. That he had not known of her love for him, and had not proclaimed his for her, before her marriage, had been due to the usual commonplace insuperable obstacles. A junior clerk in the Treasury, with next to nothing beyond his meagre salary, cannot offer himself to a penniless girl, cannot be accepted if he does. What had had to be accepted—not indeed without secret anguish, yet without fruitless repining against an event so consonant with the general scheme of things—had been Hermione's marriage to wealthy, middle-aged, good-humoured Brereton. What Oliphant had in the sequel been brought to accept and even to prize, as the nearest approach to happiness possible for him, had been a situation which perhaps Hermione alone amongst women could have manipulated and maintained with success.

'We must never speak of this again,' she had said to him on the one occasion just alluded to, 'never so long as we live. But I see no reason at all why we should not always be friends.'

Reasons, no doubt, there would have been in plenty, had she and he been other than what they were; but, given her abilities, her tact, her insight, her loyalty—given her refined temperament and his natural bent towards resignation—close intimacy between them was not quite the impracticable affair that it may sound. Close intimacy, in any case, there had been for a matter of fifteen years between the beautiful, graceful, admired woman of the world that Lady Brereton became, and this handsome, dark-complexioned, slightly apathetic man who passed for her innocuous satellite. Oliphant found himself not only her friend, but her husband's friend and the friend of her three children. He was in a very literal sense at home in Hertford Street and at Allersby, Sir Samuel's Warwickshire residence; he was treated as one of the family, and found satisfaction in being so treated. If his love for Hermione underwent no diminution, and if he was subtly aware that she was in the like case, they contrived nevertheless to be publicly and privately nothing more than friends. Or rather it was she who contrived this, contriving also, like the true friend that she was, to push his worldly interests whenever she saw a chance and earning thereby such gratitude as was obtainable from one entirely devoid of eagerness to be pushed upwards—devoid also of hope, or the shadow of it, seeing that miracles do not happen.

Now the quasi-miraculous had come to pass. Sam Brereton, the sort of man who might have been backed to live for ever, was

no more, and if Oliphant had been the sort of man to act upon impulse he would probably have left for England by the next train. But he was not that sort of man, nor would it have been like him to take any action without first ascertaining what Hermione would wish him to do. He therefore sent a telegram to her which required no careful wording, inasmuch as she would perfectly understand the whole of its unformulated purport. Then he took a gondola and had himself conveyed out to the blue, shimmering solitude of the lagoons, where for some hours he surrendered himself to sheer blissful dreaming. Imagine a blind man recovering sight without an instant's notice, or a paralytic to whom the use of his limbs is incontinently restored, or a prisoner for life set on a sudden at liberty. Such beatified beings would not, in the first flush of their exultation, examine the conditions and possible difficulties of a transformed existence; they would be content to cry, with amazement and delight, 'The world is once more mine!' So Raymond Oliphant, gently rocked upon that azure expanse in the October sunlight, put away from him all consideration of details in rapt vision of the happiness which was to be his. Certainly there were details which would have to be considered and which might indeed prove troublesome; but he did not want to think about such things yet. So far as he did foresee their advent, he felt vaguely confident that Hermione would know how to deal with them.

And, as a matter of fact, her answering telegram, which was delivered to him that night, gave evidence of her competency. '*Best thanks. No, don't come; you could not be in time.*' That was all; but it sufficed to indicate his line of conduct for him. What she ostensibly meant was that he could not reach England in time for the funeral, which, as the friend of the family, it might appear incumbent upon him to attend; what she implied was that it would be better for him to remain abroad. He himself was of that opinion. When one has waited for fifteen years one may well wait another month or two. It would be shocking of them to rush straightway into one another's arms; yet how were they to meet now without declaring their so long hidden and repressed love?

A few days later came a letter from her which was just the right kind of letter for her to despatch under the circumstances, and just what he had been sure that she would despatch. Anybody might have seen it; nobody, save the recipient, would have seen in it a word which might not have been addressed to an old and valued

friend. It spoke in quiet language of poor Sam's terribly sudden illness and end; it expressed a sorrow which was palpably unfeigned; it contained no hint of a possible joy to come. Their intercourse had been of that order. They had understood one another without need for speech; it had, amongst other things, been well understood between them that affection for the man who was dead and love for his children were in no wise incompatible with a love which was unalterable and unutterable. When Hermione wrote that he must not think of changing his plans, that he must spend the winter in Rome and return to England in the spring, as he had intended, he acquiesced at once in her wise decision. Her decision was, in truth, so obviously wise! He did not wish to embarrass her; perhaps he himself did not wish to be embarrassed, despite his longing to be by her side.

Raymond Oliphant was at this time his own master. A small inherited fortune had enabled him to retire from the Civil Service, which he had never liked, and his income was more than ample for a bachelor of inexpensive tastes. Hermione had sometimes reproached him for his lack of ambition; but his answer had always been that one cannot change one's nature, and that, since he was contented to be a cipher, there was nothing to regret in his obscurity. Contented he had in reality become—contented with his position as a virtual member of the kindly Brereton family, and with a state of things which had seemed certain to last as long as he did. He was in his thirty-ninth year, an age at which most mortals have learnt to content themselves with a *pis-aller*. But this astounding spin of Fortune's wheel had converted his passive compliance into active ecstasy, whirling him back from incipient middle age to sanguine youth. Or had it perchance, in sober truth, failed to do these things? Are there not inexorable impossibilities associated with lapse of time?

Often enough during the months that followed did he ask himself such questions; for his was a nervous, questioning, doubting disposition, and he was uneasily aware of being a little less jubilant than he ought to have been. To be sure, there were breakers ahead. He had to recognise that Hermione was a rich woman, while he had but fifteen hundred a year or thereabouts; in all probability she would incur a considerable pecuniary loss by marrying him. Then there was the attitude of the children to be taken into account, as well as the tolerably certain opposition of relatives and friends. Some unpleasant hours and days would doubtless have to be lived

through and lived down. But never, happily for himself, did it occur to him to doubt Hermione's love. Her letters, for the matter of that, would have removed his misgivings, if he had suffered any to vex his mind. Not that there was much direct question of love in those long, frequent, and charmingly discursive letters, which were concerned more with his doings in Rome and with the people whom he was meeting there than with herself. She simply took everything for granted, only intimating—with the assurance of his approval—that they were best apart for the time being. Of course they were to be married in due season: if she did not dwell upon the prospect, it was perhaps because reticence had grown to be a second nature to them both.

Jim, her only son, had gone back to Eton, she wrote. Daisy and Vi, aged respectively seven and five, were in the best of health and had quite got over their first grief at the loss of their father—as children always do. One wouldn't wish them to be different or to feel things as I suppose they must one of these days, poor little trots! You and I, who know what it is to carry about a rather heavy heart through life—and the vanity of it!—should be the last to carp at what goes by the name of heartlessness—don't you think so? It isn't by our own will or choice, it isn't a matter for praise or blame, that we are what we are.'

She had often spoken to him in that strain, because, with her ready intuitions and her full comprehension of Raymond's character, she had known that he did sometimes blame himself for loving the wife of a friend who had never had the faintest suspicion of how the land lay.

Few of us, it may be surmised, would choose to be precisely what we are, and Raymond Oliphant would certainly have liked to be a man of greater decision and less restless sensibility than he was. It was too absurd, he told himself, that his yearning for Hermione should have in it an admixture of apprehension; yet, when the month of May brought him to London and Hertford Street, it was not joy or excitement alone that set his heart thumping against his ribs. What was coming, he felt, was almost as much a rupture as a reunion—a breaking with a past which had made itself dear and familiar to him, a fresh departure to which perchance neither he nor she might be altogether equal. In a very few minutes, however, these vague alarms had been dispelled; in a very few minutes he was sitting beside Hermione, holding her slim hands in his, gazing into her happy blue eyes, and convinced—

blessedly convinced—that she at least had never harboured their like.

Tall, slender Lady Brereton had been a very beautiful woman, and was so still, for all her six-and-thirty years. She did not look much less than thirty-six—not many women do in reality look less than their age, and she had played no unavailing tricks with hers—but she had retained a youthful spirit, and while she sat there, reminding her faithful adorer of days long gone by, it came upon him with a sort of compunction that he was by ever so much her senior.

‘I’m an old fogey, Hermione,’ he sighed. ‘Are you quite, quite sure that you want to marry an old fogey?’

She laughed at that, and laughed again when he touched upon the more delicate topic of finance. Yes, it was as he had anticipated; she would lose by re-marriage her life interest in a large portion of her late husband’s personal estate. But what then? ‘You know I have never cared for money, and I have a sort of feeling—haven’t you?—that we shall be happier without poor Sam’s.’

He had a very strong feeling that he, for his part, did not wish to touch a penny of what the late Sir Samuel had left. As for Hermione—well, perhaps she had not consciously cared for wealth; perhaps she had had a rather clearer appreciation than most people of the deceitfulness of riches. Nevertheless, she had cared for those adjuncts of wealth which had been hers as of right; she had liked entertaining, and luxurious dwellings, and motor-cars, and an abundance of pretty things always about her. Could she exchange Mayfair for West Kensington and social prominence for obscurity without casting one longing, lingering glance behind? If anything could have made her angry with Raymond—but nothing ever did—it might have been such a suggestion. Being the altruistic creature that she was, she only laughed once more, kissed him on his broad forehead, and whispered a word or two in his ear which brought him literally down on his knees before her.

‘I don’t deserve you, my darling,’ he moaned, ‘I don’t deserve you one bit! But remember, for my excuse, that it’s you who are giving everything and I who am receiving.’

‘Yes, that makes me more blessed than you,’ she returned. ‘Up to now it has been the other way about, you know.’

Well, it was true, no doubt, that he had given up his life to her (having nothing else to give!), and he allowed himself to be cheered

by what she said touching his unfailing sympathy, his ever-ready counsel and help in difficult moments, of which there had been some during the course of her married life. She wanted his counsel and assistance now, it appeared, with regard to divers matters, and whilst he was telling her what he thought she had better do in dealing with this or that domestic dilemma, he had a queer feeling of being more at his ease with her as a trusted adviser than as a lover. This, however, was but a fugitive sensation, which was to recur with greater distinctness later. When he left Hertford Street he could tell himself without mental reservation that he was the happiest fellow alive. He had given Hermione advice, since she had asked for it; but there had been no need, for her decisions had been, as always, well-advised. None of them had been more so than that of keeping their engagement a profound secret for some time to come. He would be able to frequent the house as much as he liked; nobody would see anything but what was perfectly natural in that; nobody—especially not the children—must be allowed yet awhile to have any inkling of the impending change. He quite agreed. Such a compromise was reasonable, not to say compulsory; it did not enter into his mind to wonder why it should present itself to him a little in the light of a respite.

Probably not one amongst Lady Brereton's innumerable friends and acquaintances deemed her capable of the romantic folly which she contemplated. Everybody was aware that she would forfeit her large income by marrying a second time, and, that being so, everybody paid her the compliment of assuming that she would not marry a second time, unless some very rich man should take her fancy. Oliphant's notorious devotion to her had never been regarded otherwise than as a disinterested attachment which had been extended to her late husband. If, therefore, the fact of his paying daily visits to Hertford Street had been bruited abroad, it would have escaped ill-natured comment. But, as it happened, Lady Brereton did not remain long in Hertford Street. There was nothing—nothing avowable, anyhow—to keep her there while she was in such deep mourning, and, as the doctor recommended country air for her two little girls, who were a trifle out of sorts, she went down to Allersby in the time of roses, which was an altogether novel experience for her. Thither she could not very well be accompanied by Raymond Oliphant. They both felt that that would be a different thing from their daily meetings in London; they may also both have felt that daily meetings were not in all respects desirable.

'It's a case for patience,' she said, smiling at him, 'and who can afford to be patient if we can't? Oh, patience—*ça nous connaît!*'

Well, if daily meetings had to be suspended, daily letters could and did replace them. Hermione wrote the most delightful letters in the world, writing just as she talked, which is not the commonest of gifts, and her talk was delightful because it was ever spontaneous and sincere. Nothing, assuredly, in her letters accounted for an increasing, insistent, irrepressible sense on Raymond's part of what he could not bear to term disappointment, though he could find no other name to fit it. After she had left him he began analysing his happiness and picking it to pieces, as a child dissects a toy in order to find out what it is made of—a most foolish thing to do, of course; but it was his misfortune to be of an analytical turn. The result of his scrutiny was to bring him up against that nameless damper, from which he promptly shied away, only to return again and again to the task of investigation. Did he fear that Hermione's love had lost something of its earlier intensity? Really she gave him no shadow of pretext for such distrust of her. Then could it be that the realisation even of one's fondest dreams always and inevitably carries with it some touch of disillusion, an *amari aliquid* to warn us that perfect consummation is not of this world? But that was so ugly a thought that he resolutely dismissed it. Something, he could not tell what, was wrong with him; in the end he made up his mind to call it excess of happiness, which, to be sure, may, in so far as it is excessive, be a malady like another.

Meanwhile, Daisy and Vi developed, in the form of measles, a malady more susceptible of treatment. Neither of the children was very ill; still they gave their mother some moments of anxiety, as well as fresh matter for correspondence. When one writes to the same person once in every twenty-four hours, a new subject cannot come wholly amiss, and perhaps, if Raymond had pushed analysis further than he actually did, he might have discovered that this trouble, such as it was, came to him also in the guise of a wind-fall. At any rate, it was improved into a recognisable one as soon as convalescence set in and the two small invalids were ordered to the seaside to recuperate.

'You can join us at Broadstairs,' Hermione wrote, 'without violating the strictest of conventionalities. I have taken a little house there for a couple of months, and I suppose there must be some hotel or other in which you won't be too uncomfortable.'

If Broadstairs, whither he obediently betook himself towards

the end of July, had discomfort in store for Raymond Oliphant, it was not because the accommodation displeased him, nor because he was jostled all day by throngs of strangely attired holiday-makers, nor on account of discordant bands and *pierrots* and other unlovely environments. The place had one advantage in that it gave him absolute security against encountering a single human being whom he had ever seen before, and quite possibly this circumstance had influenced Lady Brereton's choice. Discomfort, nevertheless, and something infinitely worse than discomfort, awaited him. It came upon him all of a sudden, after a long walk into the country with Hermione. How or why it came he knew not, for she had been dear and charming and affectionate beyond her wont; but there the dreadful thing was, staring at him in such direct shape that he could no longer evade it, though, in an agony of shame and remorse, he endeavoured to avert his eyes.

'I'm not in love with her any more!' he groaned aloud. 'That, and nothing else, is the spectre that has been haunting me—I'm not in love with her any more!'

He had finished his solitary dinner and was smoking on a bench out of doors when he breathed forth this lamentable confession to the stars; and the stars had the air of softly laughing, as if they had been aware of that long ago. It was not, God knew, that he did not love her. He loved her more than all the rest of the world put together; only he was not now in love with her. It is probable that to the average man such a discovery would not appear so desperately tragic. The average man would acknowledge that one can no more go on being in love all one's life than one can remain young all one's life, and that the love which one may retain for a woman with whom one has been intimately associated for fifteen years is likely to be at least as strong as it would be if one had been her husband for that length of time. That it should be exactly the same as at the distant date of its dawn is what no rational mortal could expect. But Raymond Oliphant differed so far from the average that he had more than half a mind to go and drown himself. True, he could not help the change that had come over him—had there been any help for it there would have been hope—but his helplessness did not for a single moment exculpate him in his own eyes. What he had taken for the very essence of his being was dead; it might even have died before poor old Sam Brereton did; the one certain thing was that it could not be brought back to life. He was a false traitor, and it was his duty to tell her so. That

likewise seemed to him quite certain. Whether he still wished to marry Hermione or not he was scarcely sure ; but he was very sure that she would not wish to marry him if she knew the truth. She must therefore be told the truth, cost him what it might.

Well, she was not told on the next day, nor on the next, nor on the day after that. Privately Raymond might revile himself for a coward as well as a traitor ; but when he was with her he simply could not command the courage which his dismal pass imposed upon him. Half-hearted efforts only brought about the precise opposite of their aim. She saw indeed that he was ill at ease ; but unhappily she seemed to ascribe this to want of faith in her constancy, not in his own, and in her eagerness to reassure him she grew more demonstrative than it was in her character to be. Alas ! he could not doubt that, after fifteen years, she was as much in love with him as ever.

So matters stood when Jim arrived from Eton for the holidays. From infancy Jim had not only been his mother's idol, but Raymond Oliphant's very special friend and ally. For the excellent reason that he had been sent to school, he had escaped being spoilt by them and by an indulgent father ; still he was something of a tyrant when at home. Jim thought Broadstairs a rotten place, and had no hesitation in saying so. Thus it naturally devolved upon one whom he was kind enough to call his 'old pal' to devise amusements for him, and perhaps his old pal was not sorry that sailing and sea-fishing were pursuits in which Lady Brereton, an indifferent sailor, firmly declined to participate. Setting other considerations aside, it was as well to divert a sharp boy's attention from casual incidents upon which he might place an accurate construction and of which he could by no means be counted upon to approve. The plain truth is that both Raymond and Hermione were a little afraid of Jim. Not, however, to the extent that one of them almost invited the other to be. Hermione's blue eyes filled with reproachful tears when she was asked whether she really felt brave enough to withstand the brunt of her son's displeasure.

'Oh, how can you talk like that !' she cried. 'You always used to trust me, but now you seem to think that—that—oh, I don't know what you think ! Believe at least that you come first with me. Of course Jim won't like it ; we can't wonder if he is rather angry, or even horrified, can we ? But surely you might know that I should never allow him or anybody or anything to part us !'

The wretched man responded as best he might. Not by Jim,

but by a force far crueller and more implacable, were she and he to be parted. Needs must that she should be made aware of this ; but how ?—merciful Heavens ! how ? By a sheer, brutal avowal ? Death looked preferable. It would be easy enough, for that matter, to swim out to sea one morning and be seized with cramp. He listened absent-mindedly while she essayed to soothe his exaggerated qualms. He was not to worry about Jim ; she would sound the boy, perhaps give him a hint. Why, after all, should it be taken as proved that Jim would be hostile ? ‘ You know how devoted he is to you.’

As a matter of fact, Jim’s devotion to his friend was of a nature to exempt that friend from any risk of incurring his youthful suspicion, and the very guarded hint which his mother did subsequently convey to him missed its mark. It was indeed to his friend that the boy, on returning from a fishing expedition during which he had been unusually silent, confided a trouble which he would not for the world have mentioned to anybody else.

‘ I say,’ he burst out, without preface, ‘ I’m going to tell you a beastly, sickening thing ! I expect you won’t believe me, but it’s true all the same. The mater is thinking of marrying again !’

‘ Who put that notion into your head ?’ Raymond inquired.

‘ Why, she herself. Wanted me to say whether I should be furious with her if she ever did such a thing. So I told her straight out that I jolly well should. Now who is it ? There’s bound to be somebody, or she wouldn’t have asked. Who is it ? You must have an idea.’

Raymond, at once relieved and confused, took refuge in generalities. Jim must remember that there is nothing wrong in re-marriage. Every widow is entitled to marry again if she likes, and it is not at the age of fourteen that one should presume to sit in judgment upon the actions of one’s elders.

‘ I’m old enough,’ returned the boy doggedly, ‘ to judge between what’s disgusting and what isn’t. Why,’ he went on, with a momentary break in his voice, ‘ the poor old pater hasn’t been dead a year yet ! You’re disgusted yourself ; I can see that by your face. Now who is the fellow ?’

‘ I can’t tell you,’ answered Raymond shortly.

‘ That means that you won’t. All right ; just as you please. Now look here : you’ll forgive her, I suppose, because you’d forgive her anything, and I don’t say that I won’t forgive her, because’—here Jim’s voice again failed him for an instant—‘ because she’s my

mother, you know. But hanged if I'll have anything to do with *him*! I'll never speak to him more than I can help, and from the moment I'm grown up I'll never speak to him again as long as he lives. So you can give him that message from me.'

The recipient of this uncompromising declaration of war winced a little; for he was very fond of Jim, and he realised what it might have meant to him to forfeit that young gentleman's esteem for ever. But the pang was only a transient one; he was going to forfeit much more than Jim had it in his power to bestow or withhold. Forfeit Hermione's love and esteem he must; there was no escape for him. The one thing more terrible and disgraceful than making his confession to her would be not to make it.

As the dread ordeal approached there came to him the miserable solace of a conviction that it would not find her wholly unprepared. He was conscious of having betrayed himself in a dozen trifling ways; he was aware of a change in her bearing, a cloud over the blue eyes which no longer sought his, a restless disquietude which she strove in vain to conceal. He divined that his odious duty was about to be made as easy for him as she could make it when at last—one still, hot night, after the children had gone to bed—she began, in faltering, yet resolute accents:

'Raymond, there is something that I must say to you. It will hurt us both; but that's unavoidable. Anything is better than pretence.'

'Yes,' he bitterly agreed, 'anything is better than pretence, and that's why I won't pretend not to know what you have to say to me. Of course I know.'

She was weeping very softly and quietly, the tears brimming over her eyelids and rolling down her cheeks, one by one; but her voice remained fairly steady.

'It is dreadful that you should know,' she said, 'and dreadful that I should have to tell you, in spite of your knowing; but I must. For many days now I have seen quite plainly'. . . She broke off for an instant, then resumed: 'And you, perhaps, have seen for longer than I have. So it would have been useless to try keeping it up any more.'

'It would have been useless—and wicked too, I think,' he murmured.

'Perhaps. . . I'm not sure. Either way, it's beyond me, Raymond. I have tried hard, but it's beyond me. Feeling as I do now, I can't marry you!'

Her forlorn, imploring gesture, as though it had been for her,

not for him, to crave forgiveness, cut him to the heart. She had always been like that and always would be, he supposed—setting others before herself in every crisis and contingency. He had no answer for her, except to stammer out incoherently:

‘It’s because one is one’s own dupe; it isn’t that one is really false. . . . At least, I don’t think so’. . . .

She seemed to catch eagerly at that. ‘No, indeed, indeed it isn’t! We fancy that we can pick up our past just where we dropped it—as if anything were more obviously forbidden and impossible! What really happens is that time and daily use and wont transform us into different persons from what we were. One begins by saying, “We will and must be friends”; one ends by finding that friendship exacts toll.’

He inclined his head mournfully. ‘Hermione dearest,’ said he—‘for dearest in the world you will always be to me, in spite of everything—you read me like an open book. I needn’t have been so afraid of telling you what you couldn’t have failed to see; I might have known that your first impulse would be to discover excuses for me. Only I wish you wouldn’t! You make me hate myself all the more.’

Well, the last thing that he expected her to do was to laugh. He started and stared at her wet face, which was irradiated by an unmistakable light of joy and relief.

‘Oh, Raymond,’ she exclaimed, ‘have we been talking at cross purposes? No, thank Heaven, we’re talking to the same purpose, though it hasn’t struck us that we’re in the same boat. What you were afraid to tell me was that you still love me as a dear friend, but that the power to love me as a lover has somehow passed away from you; wasn’t that it?’

His countenance was the reflection of hers as he nodded assent.

‘And that,’ said she, grasping both his hands, ‘is the very thing that I couldn’t in common honesty and decency have shrunk any longer from telling you! So now we can be friends again for the rest of our lives.’

When Raymond went out fishing with Jim on the following day, he took occasion to administer a kindly homily upon the folly of leaping to conclusions on insufficient evidence. ‘I have been having a talk with your mother,’ he added, ‘and I have her own authority for saying that she has not the most remote intention of contracting a second marriage.’

W. E. NORRIS.

*WILLIAM HUSKISSON : THE FIRST RAILWAY
ACCIDENT.*

A Letter written to Mrs. Gaskell of Thornes House, Wakefield,
BY DR. J. P. BRANDRETH.

With a Note on the Medical aspect of the case
BY S. SQUIRE SPRIGGE, M.D.

MY DEAR CATHERINE,

I have been so intimately engaged in the deplorable events connected with the melancholy death of Mr. Huskisson that I am sure it will not be uninteresting to you to receive what I call my personal narrative.

The paper will have given you an account of the brilliant commencement of the day, no description can equal the reality of it, and the impression of admiration in everybody, both spectators and actors, was such as I shall never forget.

I was on the last seat of the first train, followed by six other steam engines, containing near 300 persons. The Duke of Wellington's carriage was on the other line, i.e. the South, and several times passed us at great speed, and then, stopping, allowed us to pass him. On our arrival at Parkside, seventeen miles from Liverpool, which had been accomplished in fifty-five minutes, the Duke's carriage, with about seventy persons, was taking water and we passed on to our watering place about half a mile in advance, and perceiving that the other trains were considerably behind us, I got on the top of the cutting to look back for them. I saw two trains arrive, and stop at their proper place, but observing that the fourth remained opposite the Duke's carriage, a quarter of a mile short of where it ought to have been, I was fearful some accident had happened, and immediately walked down towards it. I was soon met by Mrs. Forsyth, almost exhausted by running, who was coming for me, in consequence of Mr. Huskisson having been run over. I hurried on and found Mr. Huskisson on a door, lying on the railway, Lord Wilton having twisted a handkerchief round the thigh.

Lord Wilton desired me to arrange what should be done. My first impression was to return to Wavertree Hall, but the carriages and engines were all wrong for that purpose; there was no alternative but to go to Manchester, as there was no accommodation on the spot or any house near. With the assistance of Lord Wilton, Dr.

Southey, of London, and Dr. Hunter, surgeon of the Edinboro' Hospital, we placed him in the car which had been occupied by the band, and set off to Manchester. In a few minutes he became so faint, that I stopped the engine to enquire if any bleeding had taken place; and determined then to remain at the first house we came to, conceiving his speedy dissolution to be inevitable. After we set off again he rallied and it occurred to me that we might stop at Mr. Blackburne's, at Eccles, as from the crowds we should have been subject to much inconvenience at Manchester. When I mentioned this arrangement to him, he appeared much pleased and said; 'Pray do so, I am sure my friend Blackburne will be kind to me.' Upon the whole he bore the journey well. We contrived a kind of fence with baize, to keep the wind from him, which blew violently, in consequence of the speed we were going, ten miles, including the stoppages, in seventeen minutes. My medical colleagues were so uneasy at it, that I thought they would lose their self possession!

We arrived under the bridge at Eccles, in a violent thunder and hailstorm. It was under a very deep cutting and I despaired of getting Mr. Huskisson up, but observing a barricade on one side, I concluded there must be some kind of a road behind. With considerable difficulty we broke down three tier of defences, and got him safely to the top, which was only a few hundred yards from the Vicarage.

I sent Lord Wilton, Mr. H. Serle and Mr. Stephenson on to Manchester with the engine, to fetch surgical aid. They were absent nearly one and a half hours. During this time Mr. H. was occasionally faint, but without material suffering.

I gave him a little wine and brandy, and was not without some hope that his strength might rally, so as to enable us to amputate the limb. Upon the arrival of the surgeons we were unanimously agreed that he had not strength to bear the operation. He had some laudanum and ether administered and I then went down to the bridge, to inform the Duke and the Directors of the state he was in. They had been detained two hours at Parkside, the reasons of which I will give by and by.

I told the Duke that Mr. Huskisson had borne the journey better than I expected, but that he was deplorably ill, though I trusted not entirely hopeless.

The Duke went on to Manchester. I have forgotten to mention that, previous to the arrival of Messrs. Ransome and Whittons from

Manchester, Dr. Hunter and I had cut the boot and clothes off the wounded leg, and placed him, in the drawing room, upon a low half sofa and had everything prepared for an operation, if it should be considered desirable. The leg presented a frightful appearance, but in the wound nothing that would prevent the operation or any reason to doubt its success if he had had constitutional strength to support the additional shock. It is a perfect mystery how the wound was produced, judging from the representations of those who witnessed the accident, and in whose statements there is very little difference. The leg half way between the knee and ankle was almost entirely severed, except a small portion on the outside, but the boot was scarcely marked at all. Half way, but rather higher up, between the knee and body, the whole flesh was torn off above the bone broken, but the artery which lies over and above it was not injured, which accounts for the small quantity of blood he lost. The flesh on the outward and lower side was not injured much. It is scarcely possible to understand how this could take place if the wheel had gone over him, or how only one wheel and that the first of the engines could have done so, without the whole train following, or why it did not, from the enormous weight, entirely sever it.

Upon my return to the house I found that Mr. Huskisson had suffered from a severe spasm, which continued to return at intervals, during the short remainder of his life. He said that he could never lie upon his back, and his uneasiness was so great that he constantly insisted upon being raised, though it invariably brought on a fresh spasm. It was now evident that there was no chance and I thought it my duty to tell Mrs. Huskisson what our opinion was; till this moment all that she had feared was the amputation of the limb. Mr. H. from the first was convinced that the accident would be fatal, and never entertained the slightest hope of recovery. He said he felt himself killed. I do not think that a similar accident would have been fatal to a person in common health, but his strength was so exhausted by previous illness that his constitution was totally unable to make any rally. We had a dreadful scene with Mrs. Huskisson, of course out of the room, but at last she calmed herself and during the rest of the time sat weeping by his couch. Lord Leveson Gower, Lord Colville, a relation of Mrs. Huskisson's, Mr. Wainwright, the Secretary, and Mr. Lyttelton, with the medical men, were with him at this time. I suggested to Mr. Ransome the propriety of taking up the femoral artery, which was exposed,

it would have been of service if an operation had even been possible and might prevent his strength being further reduced by any oozing of blood that might be going on. This was easily done and was the only thing that was right in his state of extreme exhaustion to attempt. He retained his self-possession throughout, and occasionally, between the spasms, conversed with those about him. To myself he said 'You see I shall never live to make any return for your kindness. You have done all that was possible, but it is all in vain.' At another time he said, 'Why endeavour to support my strength? I must die, it is only prolonging my sufferings.' I did not hear much of what he said to others, but he spoke to everybody.

The spasms were generally so violent that we were obliged to place our hands upon each leg and arm or he would have been thrown off the couch by them. He scarcely complained of any pain in the wounded limb. The pulse was invariably weak and sometimes imperceptible from 100 to 140.

Between four and five o'clock I saw some engines go by and concluded the whole party had returned to Liverpool.

About this time Mr. Huskisson desired to make a codicil to a will, which I understood he had only made the day before. Could he have had any anticipation? He said on the night before 'What would I give to have the next fifteen hours over!' After he had made the codicil, he desired to have the Sacrament administered and, as he came to the part in the Lord's Prayer; Forgive us our trespasses, he said: 'I hope I have no enemy in the world. I am sure I have no enmity to any human being.' He never once alluded to the accident. The spasms gradually became more frequent and violent and he could not refrain from crying out, praying to be released and asking how long it would last. It was a most painful and agonizing scene, but it was evident it could not last long. He died at twenty minutes past nine, I believe, without much interval of relief, but I left him, seeing I could be of no further use, at a little after seven. At this time a man came up from the railway with a message from Mr. Moss, desiring to have the latest account. I conceived they had sent an engine from Liverpool as I concluded all the party had left some hours before. Lord Wilton urged me to return by it, which I agreed to do, and I shall never forget his activity, kindness and good sense throughout this trying scene. I am much deceived if there is not more sense and real goodness about him than he gains credit for from the

world at large. Mr. Huskisson asked him to remain with him to the last.

When I got down to the railway, I found the whole party, more than 700, still there. The Duke and Directors had gone off at three o'clock, leaving the rest to their fate, and most uncommonly dissatisfied they were. We did not get home till half past ten, and it was a mercy, considering the state we were in, that we ever got home at all. Poor Huskisson's accident had deranged everything, and I believe all the other mischances were solely attributed to it, and no blame could attach to anyone, but a lamentable failure it certainly was. Everything went wrong. I mentioned that the party remained at Parkside for one hour and a half after we left them. The Duke and Sir R. Peel insisted on going back to Liverpool and the Directors had agreed to it, when some of the proprietors, learning what had been proposed, threatened to call a general meeting on the spot, and refer it to the proprietors at large, most of whom were, of course, present. At last they agreed to go on.

This delay had enabled the people at Manchester to collect a party together, who were hostile to the Duke, and they had been furnished with tricolored cockades, by which they were enabled to recognise each other and to congregate in one place. Considerable dissatisfaction was shown as they entered, some hissing and some missiles thrown. The Duke would not go into the rooms but remained in the carriages, around which multitudes had collected. He became uneasy and insisted upon returning to Liverpool immediately. It happened that, by a mistake, the engines had been sent upon a wrong line, to take in water at Eccles, the watering place not being quite ready at Manchester. Consequently they were all upon the same line as the Duke's carriage and could not be got right again unless the carriage returned to Manchester. Lorender said he would not be responsible for their safety if they did. The Directors, in my opinion, acted wisely in going forward to Liverpool, the consequence was that the engines were obliged to proceed there and could not turn before they arrived there. The remainder of the party were detained for three hours, and at last set off, all in one train, with only three engines. These, however, managed to carry us, till we met the others half way home. Of course all the dinners and ulterior arrangements were entirely put a stop to. I will not occupy myself or you with an account of my exertions to get up a public dinner to the Duke on Saturday. Mr. Huskisson's

body arrived at the Town Hall last night and we are to have a public funeral on Friday. The interment is to take place in the centre of the Cemetery, and we shall have a monument—splendid or otherwise, according to the amount of subscription we may be enabled to raise.

Very affectionately yours,

J. P. B.

A MEDICAL NOTE ON THE DEATH OF WILLIAM HUSKISSON.

The story of the accident is not very clear in Doctor J. P. Brandreth's account, which does not tally in every respect with the accounts of other eye witnesses, though these do not agree. On September 15, 1830, the Liverpool and Manchester Railway was to be declared open by the Duke of Wellington. The double track ran from Liverpool through Parkside, and Eccles, now a Manchester suburb. On the north track seven locomotives dragged three, four, or five carriages each, on the journey from Liverpool. The number of passengers so conveyed would seem from the Annual Register to have been about 700, and this is the number mentioned by Doctor Brandreth in one part of his letter, though he speaks of 300 in another. The south track was reserved for one engine and three carriages. Of these one was a 'Ducal Car' (so described in contemporary accounts of the function) for the Duke of Wellington and his suite, one carried the directors of the railway and one the band. At Parkside the Duke of Wellington's train stopped to take water, and in spite of printed warnings to the contrary Huskisson descended from one of the trains on the north track, which had also stopped, and came to speak to the Duke of Wellington. Huskisson, it may be remembered, was Member of Parliament for Liverpool, a former Treasurer of the Navy, President of the Board of Trade, Cabinet Minister, and leader of the House of Commons, and he possibly considered that printed regulations were not intended to put any restrictions upon him. His frequent political disagreements with the Duke of Wellington probably made him anxious to display courtesy on a non-political occasion. While he was either on one of the tracks or between them, the engines on the north track began to move, as their watering place was a little distance east of Parkside. Huskisson endeavoured to enter one of the carriages on the south track, but the swinging open of the door threw him either against or under

one of the passing engines. Contemporary accounts tell the story both ways, and the probability is, having regard to the nature of the injuries, that both things happened. He was placed in the Duke of Wellington's train, some carriages being detached, and conveyed to Eccles as Dr. Brandreth describes, the train then proceeding to Manchester, to bring surgical help.

The medical details of the death of William Huskisson were related in the *Lancet* about a month after the occurrence of the tragedy, emerging from a correspondence which displays considerable difference of medical opinion as to the efficacy of the treatment given to the injured man. Dr. Brandreth's letter to Mrs. Gaskell forms an interesting commentary upon the communications published in the *Lancet* from Dr. Thomas Weatherill of Liverpool, who made himself the mouthpiece of the critics, and from Mr. William Robert Whatton, the surgeon alluded to under the name of 'Whittons' in Dr. Brandreth's letter. The first communication to the *Lancet* from Dr. Weatherill states that 'many are now speculating upon the surgical treatment of this case, and the general opinion of the faculty here, so far as I have been able to ascertain it, is that it was unscientific, inefficient and imbecile.' Dr. Weatherill suggests that Huskisson's medical attendants 'should have done more in this affair than they did,' and states that the writer in such a situation 'would have immediately decided, as the only alternative left, upon removing the extremity with a knife.' He quotes the opinion that an Army or Navy surgeon would have saved Huskisson's life. In reply Mr. Whatton, who had been summoned from Manchester to attend upon the injured man, shows that the injuries which Huskisson had received were terribly serious. His description of them tallies very well with that of Dr. Brandreth in his letter to Mrs. Gaskell. There was, to use Mr. Whatton's words, 'a compound fracture of the leg and thigh, both bones of the leg were broken at the upper third and much comminuted; their splintered ends exposed and the soft parts lacerated to a considerable extent; the femur was fractured somewhat above its middle and both ends exposed; there was here also much comminution and an extensive laceration of muscles and integuments and the femoral vessels were distinctly visible at the bottom of the wound.' Mr. Whatton makes no mention of any difference of opinion between either himself and Mr. Ransome, the surgeon who had accompanied him from Manchester, or between

himself and Dr. Brandreth and Mr. Hunter, also a medical man, who had removed the injured man from the site of the accident to Eccles vicarage, so that it is fair to assume that the course pursued was commonly agreed upon. The gravamen of the charge brought by Dr. Weatherill was that amputation might have saved the victim, and anyhow that 'had prompt and energetic measures been undertaken the patient would have, in a great degree, been spared the torture of those spasms and twitchings of the muscles and tendons, which are reported to have been so severe and which proceeded from the loss of blood and not, as has been stated, from the torn and mangled state of the nerves and other soft parts.' In another passage Dr. Weatherill attributes the patient's death to unarrested hæmorrhage.

Mr. Whatton, having explained to the medical world exactly what were the injuries of his distinguished patient and having mentioned that the femoral artery was ligatured on the first opportunity, draws a terrible picture of the last moments, and in language almost as forcible as that used by Dr. Weatherill, advises that gentleman that his letter is 'a wanton, indecent, and impudent attack,' and 'when next he favours the profession with his lucubrations, at least to supply himself with an accurate detail of the case he writes upon and to represent fairly the conduct of the man he may feel an inclination to vilify and abuse.' Mr. Whatton justifies the inactive policy of allowing the patient to die without attempting to operate upon him by showing that it was accepted treatment in high surgical circles not to perform major operations upon patients suffering severely from shock.

It was a very pretty quarrel, but as a matter of fact the situation with which Mr. Whatton and Mr. Ransome had to deal was an exceedingly difficult one. In the presence of such extensive injuries, it is quite clear that no one could say with any fairness that amputation would have saved the patient's life. With regard to the propriety of Dr. Weatherill's remarks there cannot be two opinions—his letter was unjustifiable and bumptious. We have to think, in saying this, of the state of medical knowledge at the time. If Huskisson was treated upon what were accepted lines in 1830, we must not allow the fame of his medical attendants to be dimmed, and if it seems that Mr. Whatton and his colleagues were unenterprising, they were orthodox in being so and quite probably right. Dr. Brandreth and Mr. Hunter appear to have held the view at first that amputation was advisable, as

they 'had everything prepared for an operation if it should be considered desirable.' Dr. Brandreth, however, seems to have been undecided in his views. While he saw no reason to doubt that recovery would have followed amputation, he also speaks of the patient as not having sufficient strength to support the ordeal. Dr. Brandreth was Huskisson's personal medical attendant, and was aware that as recently as three months previously Huskisson had been too ill to attend the funeral of George IV.

The fatal accident to Huskisson took place at midday, seventeen miles from Liverpool, and it was intended to take him to Manchester, but the train conveying him was stopped at Eccles to allow of his being put down at Eccles vicarage, proceeding afterwards to Manchester in search of an operating surgeon. Dr. Brandreth and Mr. Hunter superintended Huskisson's removal to the vicarage and did their best with great intelligence to keep him alive until operative assistance could be obtained. They could do no more as they had not the instruments with them. In about an hour and a half Lord Wilton returned from Manchester with Mr. Whatton and Mr. Ransome, the time then being probably about 3 P.M. Huskisson lingered until 8.30 P.M. The surgeons from Manchester largely removed the risk of death from further hæmorrhage by immediately ligaturing the femoral artery, but they did no more. If they defaulted at all, they made the error of not amputating the limb at once. There could have been no question whatever that sooner or later amputation must be performed, so that the question before them was not—'Are we to operate?' but—'Are we to amputate now, while the first effects of the terrible accident are on the patient, or are we to wait until there are indications of a better physical condition so that we do not add the shock of operation to the shock of injury?' Mr. Whatton and his colleague decided on the second course. Dr. Weatherill expressed the opinion of many members of the medical profession that the first was the only proper course. It should be remembered that the operation would necessarily have been performed without the assistance of anæsthetics, then unknown, and therefore the greater the condition of prostration in which the patient was, the less strength would he have to undergo additional shock from pain. To allow the patient to emerge from primary shock, and to wait for any improved circulation which might follow, would only be to wait for an increase of susceptibility to a second shock from operation.

But in every case which calls for critical judgment, a man has

the right to rely upon the scientific opinion of his day as to the correct course to pursue, and this position Mr. Whatton took up in his vindication of the 'expectant treatment' adopted. He brings out in the *Lancet* with great fullness the views of Guthrie on the question of immediate operation. Now Professor George J. Guthrie was the absolutely best man in the world behind whom to take refuge, especially as Dr. Weatherill had quoted a widely expressed view, an Army or Navy surgeon might have saved the life of Mr. Huskisson. Weatherill's suggestion, of course, was that on the field or in the cockpit a surgeon had to deal immediately with tremendous injuries, analogous to those which Huskisson had received, and that the way to deal with them was by amputation. Now Guthrie, who soon after became President of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, had served from 1808 to 1814 in the Peninsula, and taken principal charge of the wounded in many important battles. He was at the time of the accident surgeon to the Westminster Hospital and Professor of Anatomy at the Royal College of Surgeons; he was an operator famous for his calm and ingenuity; and he was the author of a standard work on 'Inflammation, Erysipelas, and Mortification, Injuries of Nerves, and Wounds of Extremities, requiring the different Operations of Amputation.' He was, therefore, indeed an authority *ad hoc*.

Among the passages quoted by Mr. Whatton as showing that the treatment of Huskisson was in accordance with the best teaching, one runs as follows :

'If a soldier, at the end of two, four, or six hours after the injury, have recovered from the general constitutional alarm occasioned by the blow, his pulse becomes regular and good, his stomach easy, he is less agitated, his countenance revives, and he begins to feel pain, stiffness, and uneasiness in the part; he will *now* undergo the operation with the greatest advantage, and if he bears it well, of which there will be but little doubt, he will recover in the proportion of nine cases out of ten, in any operation of the upper extremity, or below the middle of the thigh without any of the bad consequences usually mentioned by authors as following such amputations. If, on the contrary, the operation be performed before the constitution have recovered itself, to a certain degree, from the alarm it has sustained, the additional injury will most probably be more than he can bear, and he will gradually sink under it and die.'

Huskisson's case seems to be covered by Guthrie's advice.

When we read Dr. Brandreth's letter to Mrs. Gaskell we see that Mr. Whatton's position was really a very trying one. He must have known that, with the surgical resources of the day, recovery without amputation was nearly impossible. He should have faced, it can be said, a quite probable loss of his patient under operation instead of allowing life to cease without making the only feasible effort.

In such a case as Huskisson's the surgeon to-day would be over-sanguine who hoped to save so badly injured a limb, although the possession of anæsthetics and antiseptics gives all patients a far better chance. Mr. Whatton decided, and had good grounds for doing so, that such an operation as would have been necessary must have been fatal to Huskisson. Primary amputation of the upper third of the thigh would have been necessary, and even in favourable cases the procedure was attended with a mortality rate of 85 per cent. some years after 1830. And here all the circumstances were hopelessly unfavourable. The patient, a man of sixty, was in feeble health and his injuries were truly terrible. Mr. Whatton no doubt considered that even in any event there was barely any chance whatever of recovery; but amputation he believed to mean certain and immediate death. To-day amputation would be performed immediately; the chances of the patient would be desperate, but the resources of the anæsthetic and surgeon together would make recovery just possible—but only just possible, taking the age and general health of the patient into account, and the circumstances of the accident. On the whole there seems to have been no malpraxis.

S. SQUIRE SPRIGGE.

PRETE PIOMBO: AN APENNINE SANCTUARY.

BY THE MARCHESA PERUZZI DE' MEDICI.

THE little church of the Madonna dei Fossi is planted in one of the deep gashes of the lower Apennines. From any of the four rough muleteer paths that lead to it, it is hidden from view until you come suddenly upon it. Either walking over the beautiful chestnut-clad mountain that separates it from Londa, down the stony path more resembling the dried bed of a mountain torrent—or leaving the Consuma high road to the left, and walking along the brow of the hill until you come to a rapid descent—or coming up the steepest of hills along a bleak Dantesque country from Bucigna—or up again by the narrow path that leads from the beautiful fruitful Pomino, with its garden of vines and olives and fruit trees,—it is not until you come to the very door of the little sanctuary that you see it white against its green background.

It is merely a little white church, the unusual feature being a large broad portico where man and beast can find refuge when surprised by one of those sudden fierce storms that sweep over these hills, blinding and terrible whilst they last, often laden with hail that takes the breath away from man and beast. In the summer, when for days the hot sun has beaten relentlessly all life from the air, the peasant toiling up with his overladen beast from the valley finds in the cool shadow of the portico midday rest, and blesses the Madonna dei Fossi whose arms stretch out in charity and love to the humble wayfarer. There is nothing worthy of note in the little whitewashed church with the usual tawdry accessories except the Madonna, one of della Robbia's most beautiful and tenderest impersonations of the Mother and infant Christ. It is seldom that those who have found rest there do not push open the little brown battered door into the church and breathe a short prayer, looking at this dear Madonna and Child that has come into their rough, simple lives as a gleam of hope—of a beauty beyond this world of toil.

Built on to one side of the church is the priest's house with its four rough whitewashed rooms, a little kitchen and leaky roof. Outside, a patch of garden where onions, beans, salad, and here and there a lily and hollyhock grow. This house and fifteen lire

a month is all Don Giuseppe's fortune, which means a life of privation and penury; and how he manages to live and to help all the poor people around for miles is not to be explained, though he often goes to bed without dinner or supper, this good Christian soul.

As we come up the rough pathway, Don Giuseppe is standing in his doorway. He is a little above the average height, a thin spare figure, clean-shaven face, with dark penetrating eyes, heavy eyebrows, thick hair, aquiline nose, sensitive mouth with very white teeth, and small hands and feet.

His manner is quick and his welcome frank and spontaneous as he asks you to come in and rest after your long climb from Bucigna. He calls for Maria, and a tall gaunt figure comes from the kitchen, bringing with her a flask of good Pomino wine that the agent of the Albizzi has just sent Don Giuseppe.

"You are in luck, gentlemen," the host says, "for the Canonica does not always boast of this blessing of the gods. No better wine than the generous Pomino—drink and carry away with you a remembrance of the Madonna dei Fossi. Come in and rest—you are welcome to all there is."

No one escapes the kind welcome, though seldom the Pomino wine is on the table. Don Giuseppe has always a bright sunny word for all, and that humorous repartee so characteristic of the Tuscans.

A better Christian never lived, and he is beloved by all, young and old alike. After the early Mass and the reading of his breviary he takes his little cup of black coffee and then goes forth on his round of visits to those he thinks need him—often miles away over hills and valleys; with his bright presence he is a comfort to all the peasantry. In him they confide all their hopes and joys and sorrows. They are sure that he likes to hear of even the humblest things that interest them. Menica can speak of the baby prodigy with his first tooth; Giacomo can call him into the stable to see his fine new oxen; Maso can tell him that he is going to marry pretty Giulietta of the neighbouring farm. The children run to meet him as he comes quickly through the fields and vineyards with his long strides, and thrust their little brown hands into his. He has the trust and confidence of all. In the spring-time, as he watches the white wheezing oxen dragging the plough through the brown earth for sowing, Menico turns to him with a smile and says 'Sor Priore, your blessing.' In the summer, when they are cutting the corn and all day men and girls are at work

under the hot sun, he comes with a pleasant jest and word to cheer them. So with the vintage, and at all seasons he is with them with his whole heart. So when sorrow and trouble come to their doors, to whom should they turn but to him? And his soul goes out to them with Christian spirit undimmed, in utter sympathy with the struggles and sorrow of humanity, even of its sins and frailties. No one can speak to them as he can. They take his censure, his blame, his admonition in the spirit in which it is meant and even if they have not the strength to overcome the evil within them, and fail, they come back again and again seeking his help to overcome the devil's promptings. In long illnesses he is ever there to comfort and cheer the weary hours with his little Tuscan anecdotes, to amuse his men. When in answer to him they begin to talk and interlard their stories with the oaths so common amongst the people, he will hold up his hand to stop them. To Menico's answer—

“Eh! Sor Priore, we cannot talk like a book, and God knows it isn't out of want of respect and reverence. It is a habit that grows with us from childhood and means nothing—”

he shakes his head and says:

“The habit is with me also, only instead of calling on the good God and dear Madonna, I limit myself to saying ‘per *Duigybacco*’ (by Bacchus), and ‘per Grillottino’ (by the little grasshopper), and when things are very bad ‘*Porcodemonio*’ (pig of a devil), which answers just the same.”

“Per Grillottino, Signor Priore, you are right, but we always forget ourselves.”

In the chamber of death he is always present. No matter how bleak the night, in a blinding storm, at his first call, he comes, with his little oil lantern, if at night, to light him through the darkness over those rough roads. The first to come, the last to leave those in sorrow, bringing with him the comfort of his ministry. The bell of the Madonna dei Fossi rings alike for the wealthy and lowliest.

So regardless of his comforts, of his daily bread, was Don Giuseppe, that it is hard to imagine how he could have lived had it not been for Maria. When he first came to the Canonica it was indeed a problem he could not solve.

One day a poor woman came to his door to beg—a day when

there was hardly any bread in the house, certainly nothing else. He was touched by her sad tale and sorry for her, and shared his bread with her, giving her shelter for the night. Hearing how absolutely destitute she was, it occurred to him that he could not turn her away, and so he suggested that she should come and take charge of his house; he could not pay her wages, but she should share what he had. Maria was a tall, strongly built woman, ungainly in looks, with coarse black hair, and the strength of a man. There was something touching in her absolute fidelity and reverence for Don Giuseppe, and from that day on her first thought was for his comfort. The Canonica was soon transformed into a clean little house, and the kitchen brought forth—almost out of nothing—a savoury dish for his midday and evening meals. The church was kept in trim order and fresh mountain flowers put on the altar. Life assumed a new aspect. Maria soon became known and respected by the whole neighbourhood, and the peasants used to send her little offerings for the good Priore's table, which he himself would have been loth to accept. She was only too ready to do so. Sometimes a big loaf of bread fresh from the oven, a flask of wine, or oil, fruit and vegetables; and this helped much, for the stipend of fifteen lire a month was never augmented and he would never ask for more.

When winter came with its downpour of rain and heavy fall of snow, the roof leaked so that Don Giuseppe's bed had to be moved frequently from one side of the room to the other, to avoid his being rained upon, and once he slept under an open umbrella. Then, and then alone, he made up his mind to write to the 'Economato,' for it was the church's property that was in danger. In his small, neat handwriting, he explained that the roof might fall in. His letter was duly sealed and posted at the Pomino post-office. Weeks passed without an answer. At last a letter with a big official seal came, saying that the 'Economato,' having taken note of 'his communication,' would send some commissioners to look into the matter. It is needless to say that months elapsed, and winter again came, with storms and rain and snow, and yet no commissioners made their appearance. Santa Maria dei Fossi was out of sight. The little church bell did not ring loud enough.

There is no better country for woodcock than the neighbourhood of Santa Maria dei Fossi, and in years when they were reported in plenty the gentlemen of the estates in Pomino and Rufina would come up in that direction with their men and dogs—a merry, cheery

party. They were a handsome set of young fellows in their picturesque fustian shooting-coats and leggings—gay and light-hearted. They brought a new life into the Canonica when they rested there after their morning walk. They found in Don Giuseppe a delightful companion, full of anecdotes and fun, and their panting dogs rested in the kitchen in Maria's care, who gave them bread and fresh cool pans of water. When they found out what a good cook Maria was they brought her their game to cook with spiced herbs, and were clamorous for her *minestrone* soup of beans and vegetables. It gradually became a matter of course that they met and dined at the Canonica. Finding that the Priore knew every turn in the hills and all the by-ways, as also the habits of birds and beasts, they persuaded him to accompany them in their tramps over hill and dale, and gave him a gun, and dubbed him with the name of *Prete Piombo* for the first woodcock he brought down, a name by which he was ever after known. It became a yearly custom for these friends to meet for the woodcock season at the Canonica—and this brought a new stimulus into Don Giuseppe's life, for during the rest of the year he did not lose sight of them, as the little local paper so constantly reported their doings. The Tuscans are very clannish, and the Albizzi, Corsini, Peruzzi, and Canigiani can seldom do anything that is not recorded therein.

Don Giuseppe never complained of his small purse, but not so Maria, who whispered into their ears how hard she found it to struggle on; and knowing it was difficult to approach that delicate subject with the Priore, they could find no other way than leaving one or two of their shooting dogs to board with Maria in the off-season, for which they paid generously, and gave her a dress for fête days into the bargain. Young Peruzzi was often at his brother's place in Pomino, and would walk up over the hill to see Don Giuseppe even when the shooting season was over. It occurred to him that he would furnish one of the little empty rooms at the Canonica as a guest-room. Great was Prete Piombo's delight, and the first occupant was Peruzzi himself. Tall and strong as a young pine-tree, with fair waving hair and blue eyes and ruddy complexion, distinction and simplicity in his manners, he became doubly endeared to Don Giuseppe, who looked forward to his visits as the one delight of his life. After early Mass the two friends would start out for a tramp over the hills, calling at the peasants' houses on their way and lunching under some shady

tree, the same little ragged Tonio who had served Mass bringing up the lunch which Maria had prepared in a little brown earthenware pot. Tonio at a respectful distance, flat on his stomach, eyeing them, was ready to finish all there was left and then scamper home as fast as his legs would carry him. Prete Piombo would then read his breviary, and his companion, stretching his long legs on the springy turf full of spicy *tignamica*, take a good siesta. They would often push on over the hill into the Casentino.

There came a day, it seemed more beautiful than all others, not a breath of wind, the sky limpid and blue, and life in the air withal, so that it seemed hardly a climb up to the top of the Consuma. When once there you are in another world. Grim, grey mountains on all sides—arid, without vegetation—only under the play of sun and clouds they are softened into warm colouring. Keeping always upon the top, but farther on, the whole plain and hills of the Casentino come in view. There, down in the plain where the stream is hardly visible, is the scene of the battle of Campaldino, where Dante, as a young man, fought. Up on the left you see the ruins of the Castle of Porciano, where he was imprisoned; in the foreground are the ruins of the Castle of Romena, and the famous Fonte Branda. High up on the hill at one's right stands, dominating the whole valley, the Castle of Poppi, where lived the beautiful Gualdrada. Beyond, the mountain-side is green with forests, the Falterona crowning them. You can see the cone-like shape of La Vernia, at whose base lies Camaldoli. The breath of the great poet fills the place.

Descending from the pass at some distance they came to a long, large farmhouse called Pian delle Capanne. The cows were just coming in from their pasture on the hill, so they stopped and took a glass of milk. Retracing their steps up to the Consuma, where the straggling low houses or huts of the charcoal-burners lie grouped together, they turned their faces towards the sunset and home.

On the road a long single file of mules laden with large sacks of charcoal was slowly wending its way towards Borselli, the men walking beside them singing one of those primitive melancholy ditties ending with a long note, a wail of sadness. Peruzzi plunged his hand into one of the capacious pockets of his *cacciatora* (shooting-coat) and took out a handful of that rank Tuscan tobacco so liked by the people, to replenish the pipes of the men. Their white teeth gleamed in their grimy faces as they smiled and thanked

him, and continued down the hill to Borselli and Diacceto, where large lumbering carts were waiting to load the charcoal and take it to Florence, travelling through the night with their heavy horses jingling with many bells. The companions by the roadside looked at the sun going down behind the dark blue hills, and turning aside to their left along the pathway on the upper ridge, silently walked on, feeling a lingering regret that that long and beautiful day was over which, did they but know it, was to be the last of that happy peaceful life.

War was in the air. Italy was in want of all her sons. Peruzzi left at daybreak to join his ship off Venice, for he was in the navy; and the others of that pleasant band of friends all enlisted in the army. Every day brought news of the preparations and movements of the troops. The Priore no longer waited for the postman to come up the hill with the daily paper, but ran to meet him half-way, and eagerly scanned the telegrams and war news. His thoughts were far away with the young lives he had grown to love, and he shared their enthusiasm and love of country. He was proud of them, and his eyes filled with a deeper light.

Of course he followed his usual routine of duty—in that he never failed; but when he could he shouldered his gun, and with Tonino and one of the dogs he would go for a tramp to the old haunts on the hills. His eye became more accurate and he shot well, bringing home small birds of game to Maria—when he did not leave the game on his way at some peasant's house with the good *massaia*. Henceforth he was always called *Prete Piombo*, and they looked out for him as he passed along with his gun. The guest-room was seldom vacant, for it was known to exist far and wide; but though often occupied the Priore had lost all his interest in those who came and went, never even asking their names, and leaving all in Maria's hands, who made rather a good thing of the frequent presents given her. In after-years he felt a keen remorse that he had not inquired more about those who partook of the hospitality of his house, but at that time life was a straightforward road to him in which there was little evil.

The first Sunday in September was always set apart for the *fešta* of the Madonna dei Fossi, and all the population of the neighbourhood did what they could to make it one of the most conspicuous, for there is always a sort of rivalry in the *festas* of the different churches. It was generally supposed that the sweet Madonna there had worked miracles. Had she not listened to Menica's prayer when her little boy was at death's door, and

brought him back to life? Had Tonino not come to her when his wife was so ill the doctor said she could not live, and there, on bended knees, had prayed that she should be spared to him and his little children, and now she was well and strong, and active as ever? Teresina, in the dark silence of the church, had begged that her lover who had met with an accident should be spared, and now in a few days their marriage bells would ring. To those who in sorrow had come to her she had ever listened, and so it had been voiced abroad that this beautiful silent Madonna was never appealed to in vain. To the kindly Priore they were all devoted, so it was no wonder that this *festa* was looked forward to all the year, and that it must be the most frequented and talked of *festa* above all others. No Madonna was like the Madonna dei Fossi.

All Saturday before the *festa* the little bell rang out, hidden from view, to summon the faithful for the following day. Maria, with the help of several men and girls, adorned the church with garlands of green and many little bits of gaudy tinsel and stuff. The candles, brought up from Rufina in a long deal box, were put on the altar in wooden candlesticks. The Fattoressa from Pomino sent two large bundles of dahlias and marigolds, without a leaf of green, to be placed on the high altar. Stiff and wonderfully made they were and much admired by the crowd. 'Certainly the Fattoressa knew how to arrange flowers,' was the verdict of those who saw them. There was a piece of old lace found by Maria in the sacristy to trim the altar-cloth, probably the only relic of the time when the Madonna came to grace the sanctuary. The girls scattered rose-leaves and box on the ground, so that there was a fresh and acrid smell in the whole church. Outside, again, garlands decorated the porch, and the *merciaio* (pedlar) gave a long piece of red cotton cloth to hang in festoons over the church door. All day the girls from the neighbouring farms came timidly up to the door of the Canonica bringing their offerings of fruit and vegetables and eggs, and the agents of the Fattorie of the Albizzi and Peruzzi sent chickens and capons, wine and oil. Their good priest must do honour to his guests, so that they would talk of the good cheer that they found at the Canonica, and boast of it to all.

The guests expected were the Priori of Pomino, Castiglione, Bucigna, and Cigliano. There were to be five Masses, one of them the *Messa Cantata* (high Mass). The morning broke with a rosy haze and turned into one of those beautiful early September days of peace and loveliness. Don Giuseppe arose before the dawn and his Mass was

served by the little ragged Tonio as usual, with Maria and her hand-maidens as congregation. He inspected the preparations and was ready to welcome his guests, whom I will call by their parishes.

The first to arrive was Cigliano, tall and gaunt and ungainly; he came up the steep hill with his hat on the back of his head, and a red bandanna handkerchief around his neck to keep his collar clean. With a loud voice he greeted his host. Bucigna came next, soon followed by Pomino. Fat and scant of breath, he came in a *treggia* (ox cart) up the hill like an abbot of old. He had superior pretensions to the others. Had he not dined at the villa with the Marchesa Frescobaldi, who had treated him with deference and, being French, herself taught him a few words in that language? When he wanted to produce an impression, as he did now, he ventilated them. '*Bonjour, commen vous portez-vous, mon frère?*' Don Giuseppe answered, 'Here we only speak Tuscan, good Tuscan vernacular, no *parlez-vous*—welcome, welcome, all the same to our poor house.' Shortly after Castiglione, the good peasant priest, came to complete the party, leaving his trap in Pomino. There were to be four more Masses, and so they followed each other. At the *Messa Cantata* all the candles that bristled on the altar were lighted, the people crowded into the church, and all the priests and cantori took part in the chanting, so that the church echoed to loud discords of religious fervour, and the louder they were the more they seem to have been appreciated by the congregation.

'It was really a fine Mass, you could have heard it down in Pomino,' and the sweet Madonna looked down in silence on the multitude. Outside, at the steps of the porch, they were selling *Brigidini* (little stiff biscuits), slices of watermelon, and little rosaries and images of saints. The boys were chasing each other and running races. The young women grouped about at a respectful distance, talking gaily. From the kitchen of the Canonica savoury fumes met one's nostrils. It was a great day for Maria, when she could show off her culinary skill. The dinner was to be all that was customary amongst the priests on such occasions, not one course less, beginning with a *minestrone* soup. Boiled beef with onions, a fry of every imaginable ingredient—*fritto misto*, a stew of the inevitable veal, roast capons, and little birds trussed with savoury herbs on little cushions of toast, good strong *pecorino* (sheep's milk cheese) and luscious figs and grapes. The Pomino wine gave a jovial note to all, and Maria and her pretty helpmaids served with alacrity. When a large plate of boiled Cetica beans was served our good

divines got very loquacious as to the merits of different qualities of beans. Pomino asserted that there was nothing equal to the Cetica bean for flavour and delicacy, with oil; better the new bitter oil, and a little lemon—could any dish be more delicious? Cigliano loudly asserted that the Capponi bean was much superior, large and thin-skinned it melted in your mouth like butter. Bucigna was inclined to like a little red bean, and Castiglione said as for his taste nothing was more delicious than the *dall' occhio* bean, served with a salt herring! The discussion became hotter and hotter. Outside, leaning against the wall, the sellers of *Brigidini* and watermelon were eating their ham and bread, but the loud voices of the divines reached their ears, and they too joined in the discussion.

“The *Reverendo* is right; there is nothing like the Cetica bean, but it must come direct from Cetica; when planted in other regions it loses much of its flavour.”

“That is because you go to Cetica every year,” said his companion, “and do a nice little business with these reverend gentlemen.”

After coffee was served silence reigned at the Canonica until the bell rang for evening services, when again the church filled, and the women and girls sang the Lauds to the Madonna in their shrill voices, and the Benediction followed.

Old blind Trebenso had come up with his accordion from Rufina, so in the cool of the evening he played a *Trescone* all out of tune, and the young people danced outside the Canonica, kicking up so much dust that Maria was in despair, thinking of to-morrow's cleaning up.

At last came peaceful night; Don Giuseppe sat at his door listening to the owls answering each other, and looking up into the starlit sky.

“Yes, it had been a very fine *festa*; everyone had been kind; and now it will be quiet until another year. Who knows what another year will bring forth? The good God has us in His keeping.”

The morning after the *festa* Menica came to the house and asked to see Don Giuseppe. Maria was in a bit of a temper, her skirts tucked up, arms bare, and a red handkerchief on her head. She was cleaning up the Canonica after the dust of the *Trescone*. ‘Give me your message; why disturb the Signor Piovano?’ But Menica was firm, and said she must see him alone.

Don Giuseppe came at once into his little study, fearing that something had gone wrong.

“Oh! Signor Priore, you have always told me to pray to the Blessed Virgin and ask her for anything I want, and she has answered my prayers. I have nursed Giulio for six months, that is quite enough, for he is well and strong, and I have prayed to her to send me a nurse child. Here, read—read this letter! The postman brought it this morning; as I cannot read I broke the seal, and he read it to me. Oh! Signor Priore, I am so glad I followed your advice.”

Don Giuseppe looked serious and annoyed. He entirely disapproved of Menica's desire to take another child to nurse, and let her own little baby be the sufferer. He held out his hand and took the letter, which he read over several times. It was an anonymous letter, written evidently by a gentleman, to judge from the handwriting, telling Menica that she must hold herself in readiness to receive a little baby to nurse, that would be sent to her in a short time from Florence, and that she would be well paid.

Don Giuseppe looked very stern, and rebuked the woman for wanting to take another baby in detriment to her own. He turned the letter over and over to see if he could find out any clue by the writing and postmark, but to no avail; then dismissed the woman, who could not understand why he looked so displeased at her piece of good fortune. The Priore for a day or two was thoughtful and preoccupied, but after this he turned the matter aside and thought no more about it.

About a month after this occurrence, which had entirely passed out of his mind, the post brought him a letter, also an anonymous one, but written in a delicate feminine hand, begging him to go at once to Florence, where he would be met by a friend, as he could be of the greatest possible service to one in great anguish and trouble; and that as a Christian minister of God he surely would not refuse to come, at once. He must join the ‘diligence’ at Rufina the day after receiving this letter, and money was enclosed to pay for the journey.

Don Giuseppe called Maria at once and read her the letter. Her first thought was that it was a plot to murder her revered master—a Carbonaro plot of the deepest dye. She wept and declared that he should never go, even if he had to walk over her dead body. Her agitation was so great that he could hardly quiet her enough to make her listen to reason; but soon the storm

of weeping subsided, as it does with those violent natures, and he told her with calmness and decision that he was going to Florence the next day. In his life he had never had such a call of anguish. Should he, a minister of God, draw back from his duty?

As soon as Maria became convinced that nothing would prevent Don Giuseppe from going, she set about preparing his clothes for the journey. The best silk hat was polished up, his threadbare coat brushed and cleaned, his best woollen stockings got out, and the buckles of his shoes burnished. All was ready for the early morning start, and she grunted her satisfaction when she saw him dressed and ready. One pocket bulged out with his breviary and the other with a stiff new red handkerchief. No priest starts on a journey without an umbrella, and his was brown from age instead of black. She smoothed and tidied it as best she could and tied a black ribbon in the middle to keep it together. Then, shutting up the house door with a bang, and pocketing a large key that resembled a crowbar, she tramped after her lord and master down the hill to Pomino.

As soon as the carrier heard that the Priore was obliged to catch the 'diligence' for Florence at Rufina, he harnessed his best horse into the trap, and as Maria insisted on going also, he drove, sitting between the Priore and Maria, at a fast trot down the Pomino road. How beautiful it was this glorious morning! The grapes, still uncut, hung in heavy purple clusters on the vines; the trees laden with fruit, the grey olives with their green berries and promise of abundant harvest. It was like a wonderful garden all the way, and every turn in the road brought some new picturesque glimpse of the valley below. They drove past the 'Lanel' where the Albizzi Villa lies in the hollow, with trees on one side. On past Petrognano, formerly belonging to the Bishops of Fiesole, then around that corner with its sentinel cypresses that brings you first into the Peruzzi property and unfolds to view all the Valley of the Sieve as far as Pontassieve. Soon after passing the Canonica of Castiglione you see the silhouette of the Villa of Busini, belonging now to the Peruzzi, on the hilltop facing you, with a grove of dark cypresses on one side and on the other the green wood leading up to the Hermitage of Rugiano, and facing you the garden terraces coming almost down to the road. Its situation is the finest in the neighbourhood. In front of the Villa from the terraces you have a view of all the Valley of the Sieve. On one side, beyond the cypresses, you look down on the long road that leads to Dicomano

and the Romagna. At the back of the Villa rise the beautiful hills of the Mugello, called 'The Cradle of the Medici,' since that family had its origin there. After leaving Busini to your right, the good road becomes steep and winding until you get to the main road, which is but a short distance from Rufina; and there the 'diligence' was ready to start when the little trap rattled into the street. A tumbledown old concern it was, and the four horses of different sizes and colour looked very meek and down-hearted.

Our good Priore bid good-bye to the carrier and Maria and stepped inside. A large woman with a still larger bundle sat beside him and two farm agents opposite, but they were very polite and respectful, knowing who the Priore was. At the signal given by the cracking of the whip the unwieldy vehicle moved on in a sort of dislocated way, each horse having his own original ideas of motion. What with the jingling of bells and the rattling of the carriage the Priore was glad to sit silent in his corner. The journey seemed interminable, and the only break was at Pontassieve, full of noise and bustle, being market day; then the villages of Sieci and Compiobbi. At last Florence was reached, and the 'diligence' stopped at the gate for the officials to examine the baskets and bundles brought to pay duty thereon.

The Priore, strange to say, had not been to Florence for many years. He was bewildered by all the long narrow streets they passed to get to the stables where the 'diligence' was to stop. He was rather dazed when the carriage came to a standstill and some one opened the door and asked if he was Don Giuseppe Parrini. This same person put him into a cab, got up himself on the coach-box, and they drove through other long narrow streets until they entered the courtyard of a beautiful palace. Our good Priore was hurried up a fine staircase, through many noble rooms, down narrow passages, until he came to a small antechamber, where he was told to sit down and wait. It was midday, and presently a tray was brought with luncheon served in such beautiful china he could not help wishing Maria could see it. He had time to look at the big dark pictures on the wall in their heavy gilt frames until a portly dame in a white apron came in and told him to follow her. He must be very quiet and gentle, for she was going to take him to see a lady who was very ill, probably dying, and who had sent for him to come to her.

She opened the door of a beautiful big room, darkened by heavy

curtains so that coming in from the light of day you could at first hardly see anything. In one corner there was a large bed, with silk curtains tightly drawn, and from this bed came sobs and lamentations as of one in great pain or distress. Don Giuseppe stood quite still whilst the woman went up to the bed. Louder lamentations followed, and he was called to the bedside. A thin slender hand was stretched out to him, which he took in both of his, trembling with emotion. Sobbing and weeping he heard the voice, but he could not see from whom it came :

“ Oh ! my Father, I have been guilty of a great sin, and if you had not come to me in my anguish should perhaps have been guiltier of a greater. Promise me you will help me, for I know of no one else I can trust. You do not know me, but I have heard how good you are. You must ask no questions, but you will take my baby, my little Lucia, away with you up to the Madonna dei Fossi. There is a woman living close to you up there who will nurse her, I am told ; but I give her into your care, and you will look after her. Money will not be wanting and will be sent every month, and when she grows to be a big girl she will be sent for by those whom I cannot name. For the sake of the Blessed Virgin, help me, Father, for I am very ill and a great sinner. God knows how grateful I shall be to you for ever.”

All this was said in sentences broken with sobs and tears, so that at last she fell back faint and silent, and the nurse hurried forward with bottles and restoratives. Don Giuseppe was cold and dumb, and seemed glued to the spot on which he stood. When the lady was sufficiently recovered, she whispered to the nurse, who brought her a little round bundle of flannel. She kissed the child passionately, and then placed it in Don Giuseppe's arms. Then he was hurried from the room, unable to utter a word from his emotion.

So that was what he had been sent for ! Something had gone wrong in God's world ; and what was his duty ? What should he do with the little soul in his arms, palpitating with a new life ? He was dumb, incapable of action, and hurried from room to room with this little warm bundle in his arms, seeming to walk in a strange dream, and hardly realising where he was until he found himself again in the 'diligence' with the same woman of the big bundle sitting beside him, minus the bundle.

On the journey he managed to explain that it was a nurse baby he was taking up to Menica, the peasant woman who lived near the Canonica. This seemed quite natural to the woman,

and she thought it so kind of Priore to save the poor woman a journey to Florence to fetch the child. What should he say to Maria who was waiting for him at Rufina, having taken a day's holiday there? He would tell her the same tale—nothing more.

Maria was loud in her protestations that it was not the business of the *Reverendo* to bring back a nurse-child to Menica, that his goodness overstepped all bounds; but when she took the little baby in her arms the motherly instinct, which had always seemed dried up in her hard nature, seemed to revive, and she carried the little baby safely to Menica's willing arms.

Lucia flourished as a baby should, strong and well, and when Menica could no longer minister to her wants, Maria begged very hard to be allowed to take her into the Canonica. She should be no trouble to Don Giuseppe. The little, laughing, playful child grew up under Maria's watchful care, calling her mother. The peasants were her playmates. Hers was a sunny, bright nature, with her blue cornflower eyes and fair curling hair. The money came regularly, though somewhat mysteriously, to hand, and bundles of little garments came occasionally. The years passed by, Don Giuseppe teaching the child to read and write, Maria the duties of house work. The time was coming when he should hear the mysteries of her birth, and she would be taken to another life than this. But that time never came. When she was about ten years old the money stopped suddenly and nothing ever came again.

The Priore had never been the same since that visit years before to Florence. The spring of life seemed to have snapped suddenly, all his brightness had gone, and he was often sad and thoughtful. He had never been able to find out anything about Lucia's parentage, but now it was all too plain, and sad at heart he was. Lucia, however, should never know. Why take the sunshine from her heart? She was so happy, so content, loving her old Maria, whom she believed to be her own mother, and fitting about the Canonica, which was home to her. Ah! but there was now another mouth to fill, and he was getting old. The commissioners suddenly remembered to put on a new roof to the Canonica. His old friends came forward to help; and when King Umberto heard the Priore's story he sent him a little donation from his own private purse, for there was nothing the good King liked better than to give help in this private way. Of course this cheered up the Priore, but he aged very fast, losing his elastic step, and stooped so that one could

hardly believe he was the same Prete Piombo, though his caustic spirit would revive when he saw an old friend.

When Lucia was seventeen years of age a handsome young fellow from Londa asked the Priore for her hand in marriage. He came from honest hardworking people, there was no reason to refuse his suit, and Santa Maria dei Fossi rang a merry peal for the marriage. Sunlight seemed to have left the Canonica with Lucia's bright nature, but the Priore felt a load had been taken from his heart, for he knew he was failing in health, and what would become of her if he were called away? Now she had a strong arm to protect her, and for poor faithful Maria there would always be a crust of bread.

That winter was one of the coldest and dampest ever known, and the Canonica was almost buried in the snow for weeks. The good Priore had a bad dry cough, and grew thinner and thinner. Maria did all she could to make him take proper nourishment, but without avail.

One night, when the wind was blowing a very hurricane, a cold bad night, a ring at the Canonica door called Maria, who had just managed to get Don Giuseppe to bed and covered him up warmly. It was old Giovanni from one of the farms half-way down the hill, to say that his wife was dying and wanted the Priore with the Blessed Sacrament. Maria expostulated that it was impossible, for the Priore himself was too ill to leave the house—in fact he was in bed with a bad cough. But Don Giuseppe, hearing what the man said, got up immediately from his warm bed, dressed hurriedly, went at once into the little church to get what he required, and accompanied Giovanni down the hill in the chilling blast.

In the grey of the morning, when all was over, he climbed with difficulty up the hill. The light had gone out of those deep eyes, and the doctor who came up with him looked very grave. It was a case of double pneumonia. In the two days that followed all his humble friends came through the snow to see their beloved Priore, and one by one he insisted on seeing them and bidding them good-bye. 'You will remember Prete Piombo when the woodcock come and you miss him coming over the hills. Take care of the little church—be good children.'

When the last moments came he himself intoned the responses of the prayers *in articulo mortis*, and closing up his eyes gave up his spirit to God, as he had given his life.

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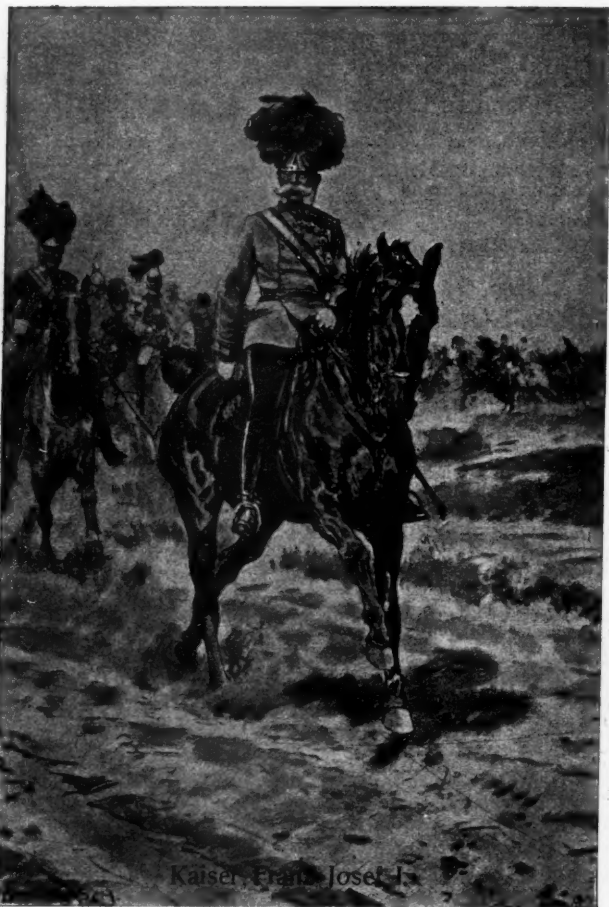
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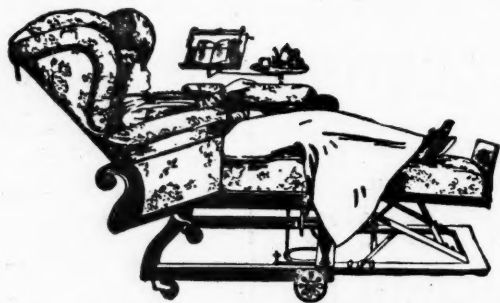


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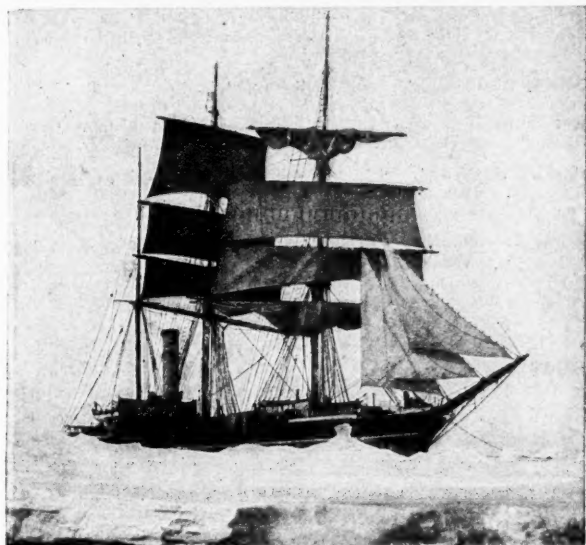
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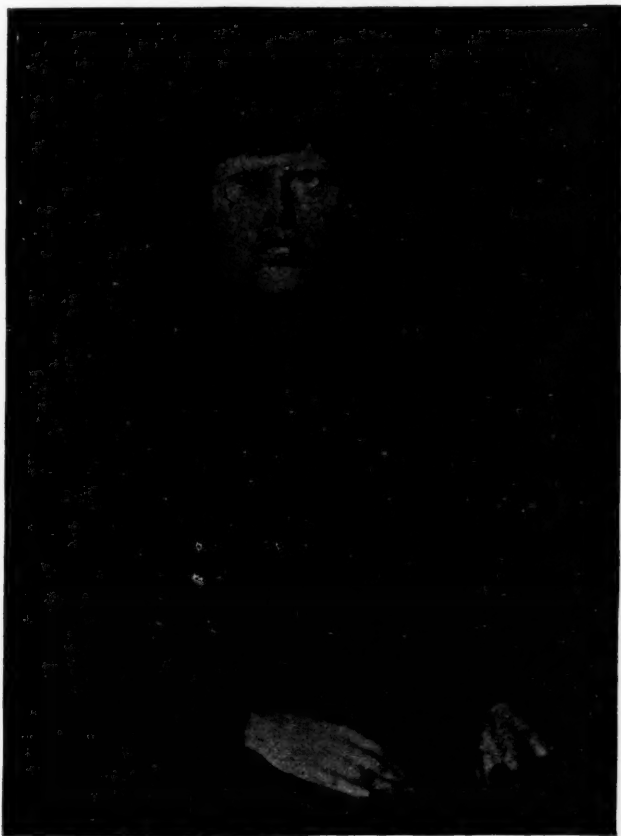
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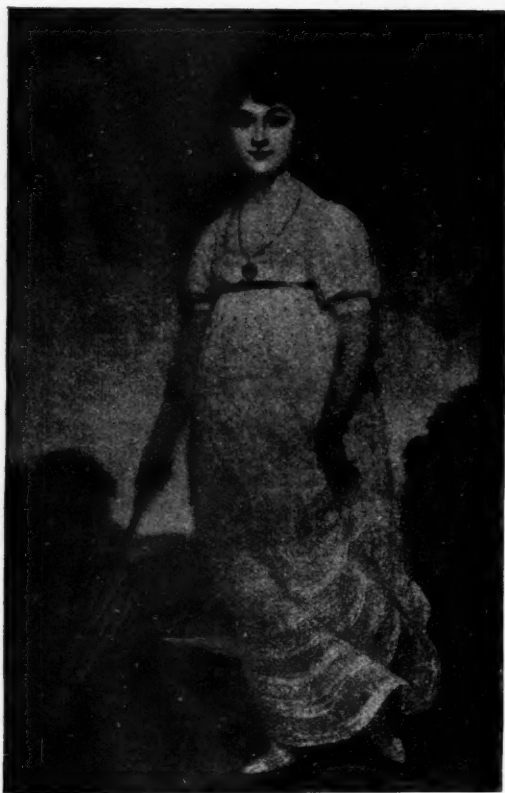
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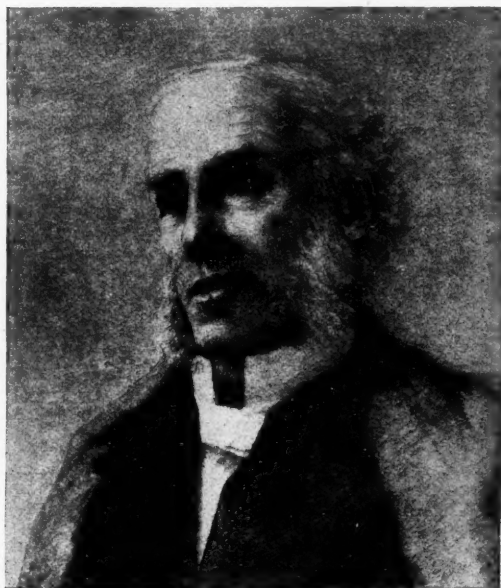
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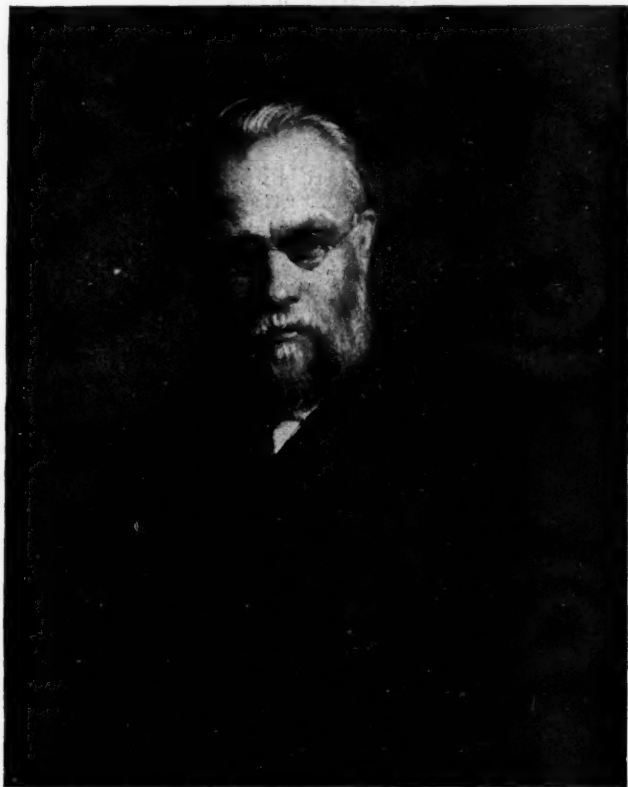
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Liverpool . . . 48 CASTLE STREET.	Belfast 2 HIGH STREET.
Manchester . . . 21 ALBERT SQUARE.	Bristol 28 BALDWIN STREET.
Newcastle-on-Tyne 12 GREY STREET.	

FUNDS
£21,500,000

Scottish
Widows
Fund

FOUNDED

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Next Division of
Profits takes place
at the end of

THIS YEAR.

Policies
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BOUND FOR THE
LAND OF GOOD TEETH.

Royal Vinolia Tooth Paste.

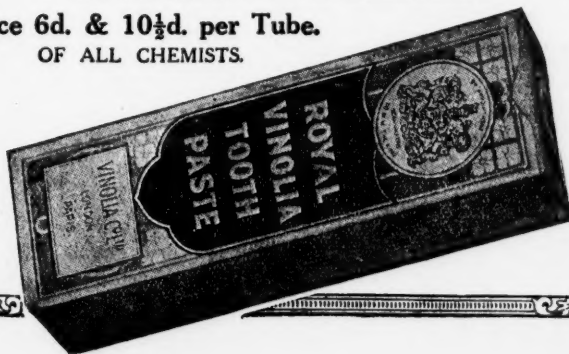
IN order that the children may grow up to be healthy men and women it is a paramount necessity that they should be the possessors of good teeth.

An idea seems to prevail that the temporary teeth of childhood are of no consequence, and therefore need no attention. There could be no greater error. The temporary teeth are subject to the same causes of decay as are the permanent teeth, and on the condition of the first teeth depends the soundness and evenness of the permanent ones.

Royal Vinolia Tooth Paste is the ideal Tooth Paste for children's use. Its regular use prevents decay and whitens the teeth. It is a pleasure to the little ones to use Royal Vinolia. Purchase a tube for them to-day.

'When buying toilet preparations be sure to obtain Royal Vinolia. A full range of this delightful series is kept by every chemist.

Price 6d. & 10½d. per Tube.
OF ALL CHEMISTS.



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FOUNDED 1749.

BOYS' SCHOOL.—St. Edmund's School, Canterbury.

GIRLS' SCHOOLS.—St. Margaret's School, Bushey, Herts.
Gwestfa, Manordilo, S. Wales.

THESE Schools are for the free education, maintenance and clothing of the orphan sons and daughters of Clergymen of the Church of England.

Help is urgently needed, and £2,760 must be raised before the 31st December to even equal last year's income.

The Committee earnestly appeal to all Churchpeople to help them in this most necessary branch of the Church's work.

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H. MAXWELL SPOONER, M.A.,
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Office:

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PURE BREAKFAST

4½d. per ¼-lb. Tin.

Compare with others at 7½d.

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FULL VALUE IN THE COCOA.

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